

ELEMENTAL CONTRAST

BETWEEN

THE RELIGION OF FORMS AND OF THE SPIRIT,

AS EXEMPLIFIED IN

POPERY AND PUSEYISM ON THE ONE HAND,
AND GENUINE PROTESTANTISM ON THE OTHER:

BEING AN ENLARGEMENT OF A DISCOURSE PREACHED
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DISCOURSE.

It is recorded of one of the generals of the politic and ambitious *Charles V.*, that when he solicited the favor of a discharge from public service, and the emperor demanded his reason, the thoughtful officer gave this memorable reply:—
“*Sire, (said he) there ought to be a pause between the tumult of life and the day of death.*” And so it would seem wise for ministers of the gospel, who are soldiers of the cross, daily surrounded by the tumult of war, and “wrestling against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,” occasionally to pause and inquire, not only into the actual progress of the fluctuating conflict, but also into the principles on which they are conducting it, the arms which they employ, and the maxims of strategy that govern them.

When the great Captain of our salvation had finished the work for which he had descended to earth, and was about to return to our Father and his Father, to our God and his God, to resume the glory which he had with him ere the world was, he gave to his disciples their great and final commission, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.” This commission legitimates the mission of the apostles, and of Christian ministers in general, as ambassadors to our rebel race, and devolves upon them the arduous enterprise of proclaiming his gospel over the earth. It is, moreover, accompanied by the precious promise of his gracious presence “unto the end of the world,” not as the Romish archbishop *Hughes* maintained,¹ to render them in-

¹ See his controversy with Dr. Breckenridge.

fallible, but to bless their legitimate efforts for the universal extension of his kingdom.

The directions embodied in this commission, have been variously apprehended. When we summon before our view the several portions of the professed kingdom of the Redeemer, through the different ages of the past, and contemplate their methods of executing the twofold injunction to "preach the gospel," and to "make disciples," we discover various tendencies, struggling with each other for the mastery, eventually arranging themselves by homogeneous sympathies or elective affinity into two general systems, into two forms of religious and ecclesiastical organization and action, though not without various counter-current lines. Generally considered, they may be designated as the religion of *Forms* and the religion of the *Spirit*, as the system of *Works* and of *Grace*, as the system of *blind Submission* to authority and the system of *Gospel liberty*, and as the reader may have anticipated, the *Romish* and *Protestant* systems. As wholes, these systems are characterized by definite and distinct features; yet their shades are often blended, and in many places they lie contiguous to each other. It is, therefore, important occasionally to re-examine their several lineaments, that we may detect them on their first appearance, and guard against the insinuation of error. Each of these systems is marked by minor diversities among its professors, yet we propose to treat them as units. It shall be our aim, *first* to group the features of these antagonist systems, and secondly to show that the Romish or Puseyite or Formal system is not, and the Protestant or Spiritual system is the religion of the gospel.

These two systems, as wholes, are characterized by the fact, that the one adopts the *word of God alone* as the infallible rule of faith and practice, and justification by *grace*, through faith, as the cardinal doctrine in the plan of salvation; whilst the other places uninspired, human *tradition* on an equality with the word of God, and maintains justification by works.¹

¹ *Baumgarten Crusius* thus defines the general stand-point of Protestantism and Popery:—"Die Lehre der Protestantischen Kirche führt von dem forma-

The other doctrines of the two systems diverge in accordance with these vital principles, but our present object will be best attained by confining our attention to the most important, to those which stand in more immediate logico-moral connexion with the plan of salvation, namely: the *Word* that is to be preached, the *Church* by whose authority the minister preaches it, the *Ministerial office* which he sustains, the *Sacraments* which he is to administer, and finally *Justification* and the *Pastoral care*, or, the principles of *Spiritual culture* of the souls committed to his charge.

1. In what light does the *church of Rome* regard the *Scriptures*? We reply, as inspired and obligatory indeed, but as an *insufficient* rule of faith and practice. Accordingly, she adds the Apocrypha, which Jerome himself rejected as uncanonical,¹ though found in his Vulgate version, and also *tradition*, and the so called *unanimous consent* of the *fathers*. Rejecting the advice of Cardinal Cajetan, to adopt the original Hebrew and Greek scriptures, the Tridentine divines thus decreed: "Following the example of the orthodox fathers, the council of Trent doth receive and reverence with equal piety and veneration, all the books, as well of the Old as of the New Testament, the same God being the author of both, and also the aforesaid *traditions*, pertaining both to faith and manners,

len Princip, von der alleinigen Auctorität der heiligen Schrift, und dem *Materialen*, von der Rechtfertigung durch den Glauben, durch die Artikel von Erbsünde, Rechtfertigung, seligmachendem Glauben, Mittel des Heiles. Ueber *Kirche* und *Gottesverehrung* hat sie Grundsätze, welche ihrer dogmatischen Denkweise völlig entsprechen."—"In entgegengesetzter Weise hat die Römisch-katholische Kirche als *Principien*, das Ansehen der *Tradition* neben der heiligen Schrift, und die Rechtfertigung durch die *Werke* aufgestellt. Die einzelnen Dogmen entfalten sich in vollständigem Gegensatze zu der Protestantischen Auffassung. Und eben so stellen sich die Katholischen Begriffe von *Kirche* und von *Gottesverehrung* dar." *Compendium der Christlichen Dogmengeschichte*, vol. I. pp. 432-433.

¹ Jerome made a catalogue of the books of the Old Testament, excluding all the Apocrypha. He says, "That we may know what books there are besides these, they are to be placed among those of the Apocrypha. Therefore that commonly called the Wisdom of Solomon, also Jesus, the son of Sirach, Judith, Tobias and the Shepherd, are not in the canon," &c. *Prælog. Galeat.* See Cramp's Text book, p. 49.

whether received by Christ himself, or dictated by the Holy Spirit, and preserved in the Catholic church by continual succession." "Whosoever shall not receive, as sacred and canonical, all these books and every part of them, as they are commonly read in the Catholic church, and are contained in the old *Vulgate Latin*¹ edition, or shall knowingly and deliberately despise the aforesaid *traditions*, let him be accursed."² To the inspired word of God, Rome, therefore, adds uninspired traditions, and the so called unanimous conse... of the fathers, or theological writers of the former ages of the church; which are, in reality, just as contradictory as the writings of the same number of modern divines, taken promiscuously from the several Protestant denominations. Yet this tradition and consent of the fathers, she pronounces to be as much inspired, and as infallible, as the word of God itself, which she tries by various means to prevent her laity from reading, except under important restrictions.

¹ The committee appointed by the council to collate copies of the vulgate and prepare a correct edition, accomplished nothing. Pius IV, after the dissolution of the council, engaged, in connexion with numerous learned men, to furnish a correct copy of the Vulgate Latin, now pronounced inspired by the council. "His successor, Pius V, continued the undertaking. The book was published by Sixtus V, in 1590. This active and resolute pontiff, not only assembled round him a number of the most learned and acute linguists and critics, but ardently and personally engaged in the examination of the work himself." He read the whole before it was committed to the press, read it over again as it passed through the press, and when it was all printed off re-examined it, and corrected it anew. This edition was accompanied by a bull, enjoining its universal reception, and forbidding the slightest alterations under pain of the most dreadful anathemas. But it was scarcely published before it was discovered to abound with errors, and was quickly called in. A more correct edition was issued by Clement VIII, in 1592, accompanied by a similar bull. An edition still further improved, left the press in 1593. The difference between these editions is very considerable. Dr. James, in his "*Bellum Papale*," notices 2000 variations, some of whole verses, and many others clearly and decidedly contradictory to each other. Yet both editions were declared to be authentic by the same plenitude of knowledge and power, and both guarded against alteration by the same tremendous excommunication." See Townley's *Illustrations of Bib. Literature*, vol. II, p. 487-495, and Cramp's text book of Popery, pp. 52-53.

² See *Sacrosanctum Concilium Tridentinum*, edit. Augustæ Vindelicorum 1781. Sess. IV, pp. 8-9.

The church is to her a divine and infallible body, paramount to the scriptures themselves; divided into militant on earth, and triumphant in heaven. The church militant, *Bellarmino* defines as "a body of men united in the profession of the same christian faith, and communion of the same sacraments, under the government of lawful pastors, and particularly of the Roman Pontiff, Christ's only vicar upon earth."¹ And he further affirms, that whilst the unbaptized, the heretics and apostates, the excommunicate and schismatics, do not belong to the church; the non-predestinate, the imperfect, and even *open sinners* and *concealed infidels*, are included in the church, if they hold the sacraments and the profession of faith, and are subject to the Roman Pontiff." Out of this church there is no salvation, and as their sacraments professedly exert their influence *ex opere operato*, regardless of the moral qualifications of the recipient, *all in their church* who receive the sacraments, *they regard as certain heirs of salvation*.

Her *Ministry* she regards as a divinely appointed *priesthood*, deriving by succession from the apostles, the power to transubstantiate the host or wafer into the body and blood of Christ, and to offer or sacrifice it, as also to remit and retain sins.² "Priests and bishops (says the Tridentine Catechism)³ are as it were the interpreters and heralds of God, commissioned in his name to teach mankind the law of God, and the precepts of a christian life; they are the representatives of God upon earth." "They are justly called, not only angels but Gods, holding as they do, the place and power, and authority of God upon earth." "The power of consecrating and offering the body and blood of our Lord, and of remitting sins, with which the priesthood of the new law is invested, is such as cannot be comprehended by the human mind, still less is it equalled by or assimilated to any thing on earth."⁴

¹ De Eccles. militante, cap. 2.

² Concil. Trid. Sess. XXIII, p. 313-314.

³ p. 304.

⁴ See Cramp's Text book of Popery, p. 301, Note 39.

The *Sacraments*, of which she numbers seven,¹ Rome regards as exerting their influence by virtue of an intrinsic, mystic influence (*ex opere operato*) regardless of the moral qualification of the subject,² provided no death sin interpose, and the priest had the proper intention; although the recipient's state of mind may increase or diminish the degree of the blessing, and proper moral qualifications are enjoined. Says the Council of Trent, "If any one shall affirm, that grace is not conferred by these sacraments of the new law by their *own power* (*ex opere operato*), but that faith in the divine promise is all that is necessary to obtain grace, let him be accursed."³ As these sacraments are deemed essential to salvation, and can be administered only by the priest, (lay baptism excepted), it is evident that the entire population must regard their salvation as wholly under the control of the priesthood; and here we perceive one of the secret springs of that amazing power, wielded by Romish priests over even the most immoral and abandoned papists.

As to *Justification and the Care of souls*, Rome inculcates justification by *works*. Christ, say her divines, made satisfaction only for the natural depravity or inherited sin of man,—for the guilt of his personal actions, of his life and conduct, he must himself make satisfaction; and the possibility of making it extends into the future world, into *purgatory*. These works

¹ Rome adds five new sacraments, unknown to Scripture as such, viz: confirmation, penance, extreme unction, orders and matrimony.

² Romish divines suppose, that grace may be acquired in two different ways, the one by the moral qualifications of the recipient, which is grace *ex opere operantis*; the other is by some supposed mystic influence or virtue of the sacrament itself, which is independent of the moral preparation of the recipient. Thus baptism, say they, regenerates the infant, or bestows grace on an idiot. And this is grace *ex opere operato*. The great *Melanchthon* thus expresses his appreciation of this view of the sacraments. "No language can express the amount of abuses which that *fanatical* opinion of the *opus operatum*, without a good motion in the recipient, has produced in the church." Apology to Conf. A. p. 205, Müller's ed.

³ Canon VIII. "Si quis dixerit, per ipsa novæ Legis Sacramenta *ex opere operato* non conferre gratiam, sed solam fidem divinæ promissionis ad gratiam consequendam sufficere, anathema sit." Sacrosanctum Concil. Trident. p. 95, Sess. VII.

consist of various external duties, such as attendance at mass, confession to a priest, performance of penance prescribed by him, obedience to all the injunctions of the church announced by the priest, &c. We are justified, say they, not by faith, but by the infused righteousness implanted in us by baptism alone,¹ by the cultivation of which, we perform good works through life, and continue in a justified state.

As to *Spiritual Culture* in general, the Romish priest regards and treats all baptized persons, yielding external obedience to his directions, as regenerate, as good Catholic christians. He, therefore, like the Puseyite, never urges on them the necessity of spiritual regeneration or conversion, no matter how striking the evidences of their estrangement from God; but he simply admonishes them to discharge their duties, or reform their conduct, to appear statedly at the confessional and at mass, to have their recent sins forgiven, and to obtain at the hand of the priest a continued passport to heaven.

This system of Formalism, as a whole, is evidently a moral monstrosity, a gross caricature of the Christianity of the New Testament; corrupting the pure word of inspiration, robbing the laity of their inalienable right to "search the scriptures," investing the fallible and oft corrupt minister with authority belonging only to God, substituting the filthy rags of our own morality for the all prevailing righteousness of Christ, thrusting the priest between the sinner and his Savior, and suspending the salvation of man on the pleasure of fallible, corrupt priests, instead of the grace of God, his Savior.

That the reformers should have repudiated this entire system as a corruption of primitive, apostolical Christianity, was the natural result of their fidelity in scriptural investigation, and in praying for illumination by the Holy Spirit. And that the entire Protestant world should, for several centuries, have confirmed this judgment, is equally natural. But it is no less a matter of surprise and regret, that a body of men, claiming to be Protestants, should of late years have adopted not only several,

¹ Concil. Trid. Sess. VI, p. 53. Sacramentum baptismi, quod est sacramentum fidei, sine qua nulla unquam contigit justificatio.

but nearly all these perversions of pure Christianity, and yet many of them hesitate to pass over to Rome, and openly profess her name, as they have virtually adopted her creed. These persons are principally found in the Episcopal church in Great Britain, and our own country, and it cannot be denied that a few ministers of other communions, appear to favor some of these views. We shall, however, adduce evidences only from the writers of the Episcopal church, where they are known as Puseyites. Hear the author of the celebrated Oxford Tracts.¹ "Scripture and *Tradition* taken together, are the joint rule of faith." Says Mr. Keble in his sermons,² "Consentient patristical tradition is the record of that oral teaching of the Apostles, which the Holy Spirit inspired." By this patristic tradition, which these Oxford divines extol as an infallible interpreter of scripture, and test of doctrinal truth, they understand the *voice of Catholic antiquity*, or the voice of the theologians of the Nicene age, of the fourth century; and yet a majority of them were at one time devoted to the Arian heresy. And says Froude,³ "Your trumpery principles about scripture being the sole rule in fundamentals, I nauseate the word." Stronger language professed Papists themselves could not employ. As to the *Sacraments*, of which the Protestants admit but two, these Puseyites restore the old Romish number, and affirm in Tract No. 90,⁴ "That there are seven sacraments,"⁵ and that "the *sacraments* and not *preaching*, are the sources of divine grace."⁶ "Justification is an imparting of righte-

¹ No. 78, p. 2 of the English edition.

² Sermons (3d ed.) p. 24.

³ Vol. I. p. 413.

⁴ p. 43.

⁵ Advertisement to vol. 1.

⁶ The Puseyite doctrine of the Sacraments, says Mr. Dennison, "I understand to be this:

I. That man is "made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," in and by holy Baptism.

II. That man "made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," in and by holy Baptism, is renewed from time to time in holy Communion.

III. That "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness" is given to every adult, and every infant, in and by the outward visible sign or form in Baptism, "water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

ousness."¹ "Whilst the received doctrine in all ages of the church, has been, that by grace we can obey unto justification; it is the distinguishing tenet of the school of *Luther*, that through the incurable nature of our corruption we cannot."² As to the *Mass*, Tract No. 10 affirms, "You will honor us (the clergy) with a purer honor, as entrusted with the awful and mysterious gift of making the bread and wine Christ's body and blood."³ Tract 90: "Antiquity continually affirms *a change in the sacred elements*."⁴ And finally says *Palmer*,⁵ "The bread and wine are *changed* by the consecration of the priest, and the operation of the Holy Ghost, and become the *very body and blood of our Lord*." "The table is properly an altar, says the British critic, and altars presume a propitiatory sacrifice."⁶ What more, I ask, could a professed Papist say? The Puseyites advocate the *veneration of relics*,⁷ the *invocation of saints*,⁸ the belief of purgatory.⁹ Again says *Froude*,¹⁰ "The Reformation was a limb badly set, it must be *broken again*, in order to be righted." "Utterly reject and anathematise *the principle of the Reformation as a heresy*, with all its forms, sects and denominations," says Palmer.¹¹ The number of other equally decided declarations, might be augmented to almost any extent. But certainly these are sufficient to show that these men are Romanists in disguise,

IV. That the gift may be received, in the case of adults, worthily or unworthily, but that it is always received.

V. That the body and blood of Christ are given to every one who receives the Sacramental Bread and wine.

VI. That the gift may be received worthily or unworthily, but that it is always received.

There is no mistaking the meaning of this. It is clear and explicit; but wherein it differs from Romanism it would be difficult to tell.

¹ Newman's Lecture on Justification, p. 247.

² Ibid. p. 68.

³ Tract No. 10, 1st ed. p. 4.

⁴ Ib. p. 73.

⁵ Palmer's Letter to a Protestant Catholic, p. 30.

⁶ Brit. Crit. July 1841, p. 24. This inference is undoubtedly correct, and as Christ is not sacrificed in Protestant churches, the table on which the sacramental elements are placed, ought not to be termed an *altar*, but a table. Altars are not congenial to the spirit of Protestantism, and as the thing was wisely discarded by the reformers, the name also should be dropped.

⁷ Tract 90, p. 31. ⁸ Pusey's Earnest Remonstrance Tracts, vol. 3, p. 22.

⁹ Tract 90, p. 25. ¹⁰ Vol. 1, p. 433. ¹¹ Letter to Golightly, p. 9.

and that if they act consistently, they must all pass over into the fold of Rome, as so many of their number have already done. No wonder then that these men stigmatize the doctrine of justification by faith alone as the "*Lutheran heresy*," and that their principal periodical organ, the *British Critic*, can employ such language as the following: "Whether any one heresy has ever infested the church, so hateful and unchristian as this doctrine (the Lutheran doctrine of justification) it is perhaps not necessary to determine: none certainly has ever prevailed so subtle and extensively poisonous. We must plainly express our conviction, that a religious heathen, were he really to accept the doctrine which Lutheran language expresses, so far from making any advance, would sustain a heavy loss, in exchanging fundamental truth for fundamental error."¹ And again, speaking of the Puseyite party, he makes this open confession: "We cannot stand where we are; we must go backward or forwards; and it will surely be the latter. As we go on, *we must recede more and more from the principles*, if any such there be, *of the English Reformation*,"² which was a continuation of that by Luther.

Another phase of *Semi-Romanism*, more or less popular in continental Europe also, and often combined with Puseyism, is denominated *Church development*. This system regards the church as one organic body, and primitive, apostolic Christianity as a mere germ or seminal principle, to be developed and properly matured in the progress of ages. It adopts as such legitimate additions to biblical Christianity, various gross corruptions, which gained currency in the church in different centuries, and were taught by leading fathers or councils. This is evidently little else than Romish tradition disguised under a new dress, and the more dangerous, because it is less palpable, and is sometimes even combined with pantheistic tendencies. This theory throws an uncertainty about the lineaments of Christianity, which opens the door for every species of error that designing men may be inclined to adopt, whilst it enables the so called church Catholic to justify every one of her errors,

¹ *British Critic* LXIV, p. 391. ² No. LIX, p. 45.

both doctrinal and ritual. Another gross appendage sometimes associated with this theory of development is, that Christ has placed himself in some kind of physical connexion or concorporation with the mass of his disciples, the church; by which his body nourishes them in some mystical manner, through the eucharist, and furnishes the germ of their resurrection body. It is indeed melancholy to reflect upon these wild and fanciful innovations on our holy religion, and it is not difficult to trace their origin in the English churches to the influence of those subtle Romish theorists, at whose head is the distinguished author of the "Symbolik," Dr. Möhler, late Romish professor of Theology at Tübingen.

2. *But we must pass on and sketch a few lineaments of the Protestant or spiritual system.*

Here again we shall observe the same specifications, as in our characteristic of the Romish or Formal System. In regard to the *Word of God*, Protestants at an early day adopted two cardinal principles, whose influence is necessarily felt throughout their entire system. The first of these was indissolubly interwoven with the history of the Reformation by Luther's intrepid avowal of it in the face of imperial and papal dignitaries at the diet of Worms, namely, *That the Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice*. In his *Smalcald Articles*,¹ written seventeen years later, (in 1537,) he employs this language: "*It will not answer to construct articles of faith out of the declarations or actions of the fathers, otherwise we must also make their form of dress, their food and dwellings, articles of faith, as men have sported with the relics of saints. But we have another rule, namely, the word of God forms our articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel.*"² The adherents of the *Helvetic Confession* ex-

¹ Part II, Art. II. p. 303, Müller's ed. Ex patrum enim verbis et factis non sunt extruendi articuli fidei, alioquin etiam articulus fidei fieret victus eorum, vestimentorum ratio, domus, et cet., quemadmodum cum reliquiis sanctorum luserunt. Regulam autem aliam habemus, ut videlicet verbum Dei condant articulos fidei, et preterea nemo, ne angelus quidem.

² On this subject the *Form of Concord* is also very explicit, although this very book was the principal means of robbing the Lutheran church in Ger-

pressed themselves in language fully as strong, as did also the XXXIX Articles of the Anglican church, and those of the Westminster Confession. In short, the profession of the bible as the only infallible norm, is universally conceded as the grand characteristic feature of Protestantism; although Puseyites and other nominal Protestants have in various indirect ways endeavored, perhaps unconsciously, to undermine it. The *other cardinal principle* is, that the word of God is the *chief means of grace*,¹ in connexion with the faithful preaching, hearing, or reading of which, the Holy Spirit exerts his awakening, converting and sanctifying influences on the hearts of sinners individually, when and where he sees a moral fitness to receive his blessing.² The truths of God's word are addressed to sinners in three different ways; *orally* from the pulpit, *scripturally* in the declarations of the written word, and *symbolically* in the two sacraments of the New Testament. The influence of the Spirit always accompanies that of the word, and so fully coincides with it, that they cannot be separately distinguished.

As to the *Church* of Christ, Protestants regard it as a divinely instituted, collective or aggregate association³ (not one consolidated corporate body), consisting of all those throughout the earth, both ministers and laity, who professing to have yielded to the influence of the truth and Spirit, avow faith in Christ,⁴ and are associated for the purpose of mutual instruc-

many of her Protestant liberty in the use of the Bible. Part I. § 1. "We believe, profess and teach, that the only rule and square (*regulam et normam*) according to which all doctrines and teachers ought to be valued and judged, is none other than the prophetic and apostolic scriptures of the Old and New Testament."

¹ "Verbum Dei est medium salutis efficacissimum, quippe cujus vis et efficacia non est tantum objectiva, sed etiam effectiva." Hollazii Examen Theologicum, vol. II, p. 452.

² Augsburg Confession Art. V. "Nam per verbum et sacramenta, tanquam per instrumenta, donatur Spiritus sanctus, qui fidem efficit *ubi et quando visum est Deo*." "For by the word and sacraments, as means, the Holy Spirit is given, who produces faith *when and where* God sees fit."

³ The very terms by which the church is designated in the Old and New Testament (ἐκκλησία) are appellative, and signify any other collection or assembly of persons, as well as the church.

⁴ Union with Christ, by a living faith, is the basis of union with the church.

tion, edification and supervision, together with their children, into different local societies, each of which is entrusted by Christ with the appointment of its officers, and the administration of the ordinances, privileges and duties of his kingdom,¹ and to every worthy member of which the Savior has promised, and actually bestows his Spirit, with every needful grace, not by any mystic influence, but in the faithful and scriptural use of the means.² Within this church are ordinarily found all those who constitute his true *invisible* church, being actually united to him by a living faith.³ As the church consists of *individual* believers, who are not permanent on earth, but constantly passing from grace to glory; she can be the depository of no other grace than that contained in the hearts of her members. Yet, as Christ has bestowed on her certain permanent means of grace, these may properly be regarded, not indeed as the depositories of any mystic, gracious influence, but as the permanent channels through which the Head of the church bestows his grace from day to day to individual believers. Thus every member of the church, which is Christ's spiritual body, stands in constant, direct, spiritual connexion with Christ, the head, and in incessant dependence on him. The difference between the Romish and Protestant idea of the church, may be clearly characterized by a single feature of antithesis. According to Rome, the sinner gains access to Christ through the church; but according to Protestants, he gains access to the church through Christ (that is, by faith in him). According

¹ "Obwohl als Stand eingesetzt (says Hase) von Gott, geht doch alle Gewalt des Priesterthums von der Gemeinde aus. Hierdurch ist die katholische Vorstellung des Priesterthums verworfen, als eines nothwendigen Mittleramtes zwischen Christo und der Gemeinde, und der alt-christliche Gedanke eines allgemeinen Priesterthums der Christenheit, wieder anerkannt." *Huterus Redivivus*, p. 318.

² The Augsburg Confession thus defines the church: *Est autem ecclesia congregatio sanctorum, in qua evangelium recte docetur, et recte administrantur sacramenta.* Art. VII.

³ Luther says: Ich glaube dasz eine heilige Christliche Kirche sei auf Erden, Das ist die Gemeinde und Zahl oder Versammlung aller Christen in aller Welt, die einge Braut Christi und sein geistlicher Leib." "Die Idee der Kirche ist im protestantischen Sinne die einer zwar äusserlichen (nicht bloß die unsichtbare, ja die unsichtbare Kirche würde nur *innerhalb* der

to the former he makes a profession of religion before he possesses it; in the latter he must possess religion before he professes to do so. Into the one church he is received unconverted, in order that he may, by baptism, have his natural depravity forgiven for Christ's sake, and then make satisfaction for his personal sins by penance, and merit his salvation under the guidance of the priests; into the other he is not received until the Holy Spirit has enlightened his mind, and wrought faith in him, through the word and ordinances of the church, and when he "believes in the Lord Jesus Christ with all his heart," (Acts 8: 37,) he "may be baptized," and thus be added to the church (together with his children, to whom also the promises of the gospel are given) and be admitted to all the privileges of a christian.

The *Ministry* Protestants regard, not as a distinct *order*, perpetuated by apostolical succession, and serving as channels for certain mystic influences; but as a divinely appointed *office* in the church, whose incumbents are appointed by the church, and publicly recognized (ordained) by the existing ministry as her agents, to preach the word, and dispense the sacraments. In connexion with these various means of grace, the Holy Spirit bestows his gracious influences, producing faith and a sense of pardoned sin, when and where he sees a moral fitness, without the ministers interposing, except to publish the plan of salvation to seeking sinners, and the promises of God's word to all true penitents. The Romish system, interposes the priest between Christ and the believer, and supposes him to obtain pardon, not from God directly, but mediately through

sichtbaren gedacht), aber nur für *innere Zwecke*, mit geistigen Mitteln, unter einem himmlischen Haupte—ferner die einer göttlichen Ordnung, jedoch freier, so dass nur Mittel der Ueberzeugung dargeboten werden—endlich eine Trägerin des göttlichen Geistes, aber so, dass derselbe nicht in sie *magisch*, substantiell gelegt worden sei, sondern sich den Empfänglichen mittheile durch Gottes Wort und das Sacrament." Baumgarten Crusius' Dogmengeschichte, I, p. 432-3. Gerhard defines the church as "Cætus hominum per prædicationem verbi et administrationem sacramentorum, ex mundo ad regnum Dei vocatorum, in quo coetu sunt electi juxta prænotationem patris, quibus sunt mixti non sancti, sed tamen eandem doctrinam profitentes." Tom: V, p. 515.

the pretended sin forgiving power of the priest; whilst the advocate of Protestantism points the sinner directly to his God who alone can forgive sin, and bids him ask of him pardon and grace to help in every time of need, assured that Christ has neither forsaken his church, nor confided the *judicial* administration of eternal interests to fallible and oft polluted hands.

The *Sacraments*, that is, baptism and the eucharist, according to the Protestant system, have the same intrinsic adaptation and efficacy which belong to other means instituted by God, and are sufficient by the divine appointment and the Spirit's influence, to communicate the blessings they were designed to convey, when properly received, when partaken of with a moral fitness or receptivity for those blessings; but they fail to effect the end, like the preached or written truth, when not received in a proper frame of mind. The Protestant system makes the sacraments exhibitions of *divine truth*, and thus means of grace, whilst that of Rome gives them an *ex opere operato* influence, as indispensable channels of divine grace. The latter leads men to place more dependance on outward ordinances, and on the ritual accuracy of their administration, than on the spiritual qualifications of the recipient's heart, and the truths they represent. It leads the believer to the priest as a mediator between him and God, instead of sending him directly and "boldly to the throne of grace, that he may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Finally, as to the *Justification* of the sinner before God, and the spiritual *Care of his soul* by the minister, the Protestant system makes his pardon a forensic and instantaneous act of God, by which the believing sinner is released from the penalty of the divine law, and declared to be entitled to heaven, purely in consideration of the merits and atonement of Christ.

This doctrine *Luther* characterized as the cardinal doctrine, by which the church must stand or fall (*articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*), and it is indubitably the doctrine, which above all others, diffuses its pure and spiritual light over the whole field of Christian theology. It tends to cultivate an el-

evated, pure and spiritual piety, as far removed from the pharisaic, mercenary, and practically immoral religion of Rome on the one hand, as from the theoretical irresponsibility, and the avowed impurity of the Antinomian theology on the other. This Protestant doctrine of salvation by grace, tends to keep the sinner clothed in humility at the foot of the cross, and yet elevates to the highest possible degree, his views of the boundless goodness, of the infinite holiness and glory of God.

As to the *Spiritual Culture of souls* or Pastoral Care, whilst the Romish and Puseyite system ties the sinner to the car of the priests, and makes him dependent on his blind guides, who inculcate a religion of mere forms, and delude him with the hope of certain salvation through these outward performances; the Protestant minister feels, that his perpetual vocation is to point the sinner to his crucified Redeemer, to regard and represent all men as by nature and practice sinners, and enemies of God, whether they attend on the outward ordinances or not, whether they are baptized or not, until they exhibit evidence of being "born of the *Spirit*" as well as of "water," until they perform "works meet for repentance." Accordingly, in all his intercourse with them, as well as in his public ministrations, he divides his congregation into two classes, into saints and sinners, into converted and unconverted. He dwells much on the evidences of regeneration, as consisting both in an internal change in the soul, a change of the habitual views, feelings and purposes of the mind, and in a correspondent, entire change of life and conversation. He urges all to regard themselves as unregenerate, unless they are conscious of this inward change, and find their life exhibiting the fruits of the Spirit, so that old things have passed away, and "behold all things have become new" unto them. The Romish or Puseyite priest need have but little concern for the safety of his flock, so long as they all attend on the outward ordinances with seriousness; for then they are all, in his judgment, regenerate children of God. But the Protestant minister knows, on the testimony of his divine Redeemer, that all who are "born of the flesh" are flesh, or sinful, and that unless they are "born

again of the water and of the Spirit," they cannot enter into the kingdom of God. He urges them, therefore, to flee from the wrath to come, to be faithful in the use of the divinely appointed external means, and to be importunate at the throne of grace for the converting and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. He watches the spiritual condition of each member of his charge, he rejoices in every evidence of the work of the Spirit in a single individual, and when it pleases God to pour out his Spirit upon his flock in general, and to grant a pentecostal season of revival, he regards it as the highest honor, as well as favor, which the great Head of the church bestows on his faithful servants in the present life.

Such are the features of these two antagonist versions of Christianity. We must now briefly recount the evidence

II. *That the former is not, and the latter is, the Christianity of the Bible.*

1. This is evident from the fact, easily established,

That the Bible is, as Protestants allege, the sufficient and only infallible rule of faith and practice, in opposition to all additions, whether under the name of Romish traditions, or its Puseyite synonym, church development, and also, that it is the principal means of grace.

As Romanists and Puseyites professedly admit, that the bible is an infallible rule of faith and practice, we need not adduce proof of the fact. But as they virtually retract this concession, and make the word of God of none effect by their traditions, it behooves us to meet them on this ground, and demonstrate the sufficiency and exclusive claims of the inspired volume.

It is a dictate of reason, that if inspiration from God was requisite at all, to teach and confer reliability on the doctrines contained in revelation, then the unaided powers of man were insufficient for this purpose. And if they were insufficient to teach those doctrines, how should they suffice for others, if God deemed others necessary for us? If, therefore, the developed views of subsequent ages had been designed as a supplement to the apostolic instructions, God would doubtless have provided an inspired record of them. We might with equal

propriety have been left to learn the teachings of the apostles from uninspired tradition, as those of subsequent ages. But we know of no inspired teachers in the post-apostolic ages, either in the Nicene era or any other, and therefore must repudiate all such additions to the word of God.

It is natural to suppose that if God favored us with a revelation, it would contain all that is necessary to its recipients for salvation. It is equally evident, that to accomplish its end, a revelation must be intelligible. It will not be denied that the oral instructions of the apostles were intelligible to their hearers, and that those same instructions, recorded by the apostles themselves, and sent in their epistles to distant churches, were intelligible to their primitive readers. What rational ground is there, therefore, to doubt their intelligibility to us, if acquainted with their language and the various geographical, historical and other archeological circumstances, to which they frequently allude? These books are, moreover, addressed to all christians promiscuously, and not to ministers exclusively; hence the apostles must have believed them intelligible. The apostle Paul calls upon his Thessalonian brethren, (1 Thess. 5: 21.) to "prove all things." The beloved John directs his disciples to "try the spirits" (1 John 4: 1.). The Bereans were applauded by Paul for testing even his apostolic instructions by the scriptures, and the divine Master himself commands us to "search the scriptures." The duty of exercising our private judgment on all subjects of a religious nature, subjects especially taught us in scripture, is strongly inculcated by Paul. "So then, every one of us shall give an account of *himself* to God." (Rom. 12: 14.) Consequently the obligation rests on every one of us, to search the scriptures prayerfully and diligently, that we may hope for that "eternal life which is in them;" and the church of Rome is found fighting against God, by prohibiting the use of his word to her members,¹ as are the Puseyites also, and all others who corrupt the purity of the gospel by human additions or theories.

¹ "Pius VII, writing to the archbishop of Gnezn in 1816, calls the Bible Society "a most crafty device, by which the very foundations of religion are

But the *sufficiency* and infallibility of scriptures, as well as the *exclusiveness* of their title to this character, are unequivocally taught. What other doctrine can be extracted from the declaration of Paul to Timothy: "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are *able to make thee wise unto salvation*;"¹ or from his monitory denunciation addressed to the Galatians: "*Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*"² And at the close of the Revelation of St. John, we have the fearful judgment denounced against all who "add to," or "take from" that book, and by parity of reason, from any other book of the Christian Scriptures, "*that God will take away their part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*"³

How criminal and destructive to the purity of the Christian religion, is the conduct of the Romish church, which presumes to supply pretended deficiencies in the word of God, by the addition of Tradition, and to decide on its import by her own action, together with the fabled unanimous consent of the fathers! As to *oral* tradition or transmission of the sayings of Christ or his apostles, for eighteen hundred years, the very idea is absurd. How many facts have been handed down to us from the days of *Christopher Columbus*, concerning the condition of the aborigines of our land, beside what is contained in books? Probably not a single fact or event. And if three and a half centuries have thus obliterated all traces of

undermined, a pestilence and defilement of the faith, most imminently dangerous to souls." Leo XII, in 1824, speaking of the same institution, says: "It strolls with effrontery throughout the world, contemning the traditions of the holy Fathers, and contrary to the well known decree of the council of Trent, labors with all its might, and by every means, to translate, or rather to pervert the holy Bible into the vulgar languages of every nation; from which proceeding it is greatly to be feared, that what is ascertained to have happened to some passages, may also occur with regard to others, to wit: that by a perverse interpretation, the gospel of Christ be turned into a human gospel, or what is still worse, into the gospel of the devil." See Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XII, and also Cramp's Text book of Popery, p. 60.

¹ 1 Tim. 3: 15.

² Gal. 1: 18.

³ Rev. 22: 19.

oral tradition on subjects so interesting to the parties themselves, how should similar traditions survive eighteen centuries? What single fact or sentiment do we know, except what is contained in the writings of antiquity, concerning Julius Cæsar, or of Augustus, or Nero, who lived in the same century with Christ? Absolutely nothing at all. But passing along the stream of time, do not some events reach us by oral tradition from the succeeding centuries? Do we know nothing through this source, concerning Trajan, or Marcus Antoninus, or of Constantine the Great in the fourth century; or of Charlemagne in the eighth? or of the first discovery of this country by the Northmen in the tenth century? of William the Conqueror in the eleventh? of Wickliffe in the fourteenth? Nay even of the immortal *Luther* himself, although no uninspired man ever arrested more general attention, or retained it more constantly; is there anything known to us by mere oral tradition concerning his opinions and actions, beyond what is found on record?¹ I am not aware of a single item of the kind. How puerile, therefore, the folly of Romish pretence to the possession of any such information concerning Christ and his apostles? As to *written* traditions or reports concerning their doctrines and actions, found in the Apocryphal books of the New Testament, and writings of some early fathers; they are as perfectly accessible to Protestants as to Romanists, and are confessedly of not the least value. The so called unanimous consent of the fathers, which Papal authors so much laud, is a figment of the imagination; for it cannot be successfully denied, that the ancient fathers differ from each other fully as much as the same number of modern prominent divines of evangelical churches. Of what value then can be this traditive interpretation of scripture, when every diversity of doctrine can be proved by it? The idea that the general or *Ecu-*

¹ Of the uncertainty of oral tradition, the *Mensalia* or *Table talk* of Luther affords a striking illustration. Its contents were entrusted to oral transmission only about twenty years; yet who that is acquainted with the genuine publications of Luther, can fail to detect much that is spurious in that singular production? (It was first published in 1566, by John Aurifaber.)

menical councils of the church afford a correct and reliable rule of truth, or of scriptural interpretation, is likewise a specious illusion, which must vanish before an impartial knowledge of their constituency and action. If those councils had fairly represented the sentiments of great bodies of *enlightened* and *truly pious* churches, they would be worthy of higher consideration *on those points* in which *they harmonize*, though they would still be fallible; but this, in most instances, they did not. Of the piety belonging to the members of the Romish council of Constance, in the fifteenth century, if the flames which consumed Huss and Jerome did not sufficiently illustrate it, you can form a judgment from the fact of well attested history, that they brought with them three hundred and ten musicians and fiddlers, two hundred cooks, seventy-five confectioners, and fifteen hundred prostitutes!¹ The celebrated council of Nice, A. D. 325, the first general council called by imperial order, was not only at one period of its session strongly inclined to favor Arianism; but its members were on the point of *enjoining the celibacy* of the clergy, and could be restrained only by the influence of the pious and venerable one-eyed *Paphnutius*, who was listened to the more cheerfully, because he had all his life lived in celibacy himself. The number of ministers constituting the earlier councils, was moreover not so respectable as to inspire much confidence. That of Nice in A. D. 325, consisted of from two hundred and fifty to three hundred ministers, that of Constantinople in 381, embraced one hundred and fifty, and that of Ephesus, in 431, comprised two hundred!² How small a number, compared to the millions of true believers in the church universal! Neither the numerical nor moral constituency of these councils, therefore, entitles them to any deference as to infallibility, and of miraculous guidance, no Protestant can even entertain the idea.

Equally nugatory is the opinion of the Tractarian or Pusey-

¹ See Fuhrman's Handwörterbuch, vol. I, p. 559.

² Idem I, p. 217.

ite divines of England and their allies in Germany and America, who talk learnedly about *the Catholic voice antiquity*, and point especially to the church of *the Nicene age and the century following*. You have already heard, that even in the celebrated council of Nice, there was far from being a unanimity; and the difference related to the essential equality of the Son of God with the Father, a point universally admitted by all orthodox churches of the present age. That consiliar assembly was, therefore, less unanimous than the different evangelical denominations of our day. Of the sentiments of those early divines in general, we have comparatively a very imperfect representation in the writers extant. It is estimated, that in the fourth or Nicene century, the entire christian Church, East and West, numbered about 30,000 ministers. Admitting three generations of them in the century, we have about 90,000 clergy. Now of all these, we have left the writings of only about fifteen, or at most, twenty; and these were not deputed to speak for any but themselves. Hence we know the opinions of only twenty out of 90,000 ministers, and these conflicting on a multitude of doctrines. Yet in endeavoring to follow the sentiments of these few writers, the Tractarians profess or imagine themselves to be following the voice of the great mass of divines of that century, yea the voice of "*Catholic Antiquity!*" That the church in these two centuries exhibited as great a diversity of sentiment as in any other, and is as little capable of serving as our guide, is demonstrated by the long list of controversies which make up her history, viz: those of the Arians, Semiarians, Origenists, Eusebians, Homiousians, Apollinarians, Anthropomorphites, Messalians or Euchites, Manicheans, Eustathians, Photinians, Macedonians, Meletians, Luciferians and Donatists, in the fourth century; and in the fifth the Pelagians, Semipelagians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Donatists, Novatians, the Acephali, Monophysites, Jacobites, Theopaschites, Predestinarians, and others of minor note. Many of these sects were denounced by particular synods or councils as heretics; yet they grew up in the church, and were the cause of much agitation in it.

In short, would we form an impartial estimate of the aid to be afforded us by the interpretations of others, either ancient or modern, in our biblical investigations, we must regulate our judgment by the acknowledged maxims of uninspired exegesis. As the Bible, though a revelation from heaven, is written in the language of men, it must be interpreted like other works. Take, for example, the Constitution of the United States;—those clauses in it—and they constitute a large part of the whole—which all interpret alike, are regarded as fully understood, and the provisions which all find in them, are received as certainly taught. The few which are differently interpreted, such as the extent of power conceded to Congress for internal improvements, a tariff for protection, &c., are less certain, and are open for discussion. Thus also those doctrines, duties and facts, which all enlightened and pious christians, having full access to the word of God agree in finding there, may be regarded as the undisputed and undisputable teachings of Scripture, and those on which they differ, as less clearly revealed, and as disputed. If the same norm be applied to the disputed doctrines, it would of course afford only a probability in favor of one or other sectarian peculiarity, a probability proportionate to the majority of enlightened bible christians, who have declared in its favor. This test cannot be applied to christians of all periods; for after the lapse of some centuries, the bible was a sealed book, and was not accessible to the laity generally, until the world was blessed with the art of printing, to furnish the book of God, and the Reformation gave liberty to use it. In estimating this majority, the Romish church is of course excluded, as her laity and clergy have not free access to the bible. Those Protestant countries only can be fairly included, which tolerate unrestricted dissent from the established church, and more especially those in which no church is legally established, and all denominations enjoy equality of rights and patronage, as in the United States. According to this criterion the early councils, though their proximity to the apostles affords them some advantage, were, from the paucity of their members, but imperfect tests of the gener-

al sentiment of the church, though the best we possess of that period. The councils of later periods down to the Reformation, are almost wholly worthless, on account of the corruption of the Romish church, and her suppression of the bible. The views of the Reformers begin a new era of impartial, scriptural investigation, though at first laboring under many disadvantages. But the united testimony of all truly pious Protestant christians in Europe, and especially in the United States, proclaims the true *Catholic voice of Christianity*, on the doctrines of God's Holy Word, a voice far more to be relied on than the decrees of any council or synod ever held, because embracing the testimony of ten thousand times more independent witnesses than any council ever did. From all this it is evident, that on Protestant principles, the bible being received as the infallible and sufficient rule of faith and practice, there is more light to be obtained in the interpretation of scripture from the judgment of the present evangelical Christendom, than from the voice of Catholic antiquity in the Nicene or any other age, especially on the doctrinal portions, which depend, not on extraneous archeological references for their meaning, but on the general laws of language, which are the same in all ages and all tongues.

Finally, that the word of God is also *the chief means of grace*, is evident as well from the Savior's Commission as from other portions of the sacred volume. It is, therefore, not secondary to the sacraments, as Romanists contend.

"Go ye into all the world, says the Savior, and *preach the gospel* to every creature; he that *believeth* and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that *believeth* not shall be damned." Here preaching the "gospel," the truths of God's word, is placed *foremost* in the list of instrumentalities, and baptism is only appended as a rite to be performed *after* the Holy Spirit, through the preached word, has wrought faith in the hearer's soul. But faith presupposes regeneration. Hence, as truth is the instrumentality employed by the Holy Spirit in the production of *regeneration* and *faith*, and as baptism is to be added *after* the great moral change, conversion, has been effected

in adults, it follows that the truth or word is the grand and principal means of grace, and not secondary to baptism.

In other passages the *mission of the apostles* is characterized as a mission to *preach*, and baptism is not even named at all. Jesus ordained the twelve, we are told, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to *preach*, &c.; Mark 3: 14, 15. And Paul even thanks God, in his epistle to the Corinthians,¹ that he had baptized none of them save Crispus and Gaius, and adds: "For Christ sent me, *not to baptise*, but to *preach* the gospel." Paul, therefore, certainly regarded preaching as far more important than baptism. Of the apostles, Luke informs us, they *daily* in the temple and in every house, ceased ~~not to teach~~ *and to preach* Jesus Christ. Acts 5: 41, 42. And in order to gain more time for their great work, they appointed deacons to attend at tables, that they might give themselves "continually to prayer and the *ministry of the Word*," but they say nothing of baptism and the Lord's supper. Paul expressly tells the Romans (10: 13-15.) that faith comes by *hearing* (not by baptism); and to the Corinthians he says, "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you, through the *gospel*. 1 Cor. 4: 15. We are regenerated by the incorruptible "*seed of the word*."² We are sanctified by "*the truth*." In short, our call,³ our convictions,⁴ regeneration, our faith, our sanctification,⁵ our preservation⁶ and salvation,⁷ are all produced by the *word* or *truth*, and it must be the grand means of grace, as affirmed by Protestants.⁸ Baptism is indeed an ordinance of great importance, the neglect of which is highly criminal, and when intentional, involves the loss of the soul. It is important as the initiatory rite securing the privileges of membership in the visible church, it is

¹ 1 Cor. 1: 14-17.

² See also 1 Peter 1: 23. Luke 8: 4, 11, 15. Here the whole process of conversion is described, and the grand instrumentality is the word or seed, but not a syllable is said of baptism. Also James 1: 18.

³ 1 Tim. 2: 14. ⁴ Jer. 23: 29. ⁵ John 17: 17. ⁶ Psalm 119: 11.

⁷ 1 Tim. 2: 4. ⁸ Verbum Dei est medium salutis *efficacissimum*, quippe cujus vis non est tantum objectiva, sed etiam effectiva. Hollazii Theol. Dog. II. p. 452.

important on account of the fundamental truths which it symbolically inculcates, namely the depravity of man, and necessity of the purifying influences of the Holy Ghost; and it is important as an appointed means for the gracious influences of the Spirit, and where there is a moral qualification, also for the pardon of sin. But it is the word of God, as we have fully proved, and not baptism, which is the principal means for the awakening, conversion and sanctification of the soul.

2. *That the Romish system is not, and the Protestant system is the Christianity of the Bible, is evident when we examine their several views of the church of Christ on earth.*

1) The church of Christ is not, as Romanists affirm, one visible, closely compacted *organic* body, under one visible *head*, with a graduated hierarchy, pledged to implicit obedience; but all local churches are, *jure divino*, of *equal rank*, each one possessing *entire jurisdiction* over itself, and the church of Christ embracing and consisting of them all.

To the important question, *what is the church*, let the apostle Paul himself furnish the reply. "Paul, (says he) unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, and to *all* in every place, that call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord."¹ It consists of those in every place, who are called through the gospel to be saints, and who profess to be so, that is, who call upon, profess, the name of our Lord. Or, as the Augsburg Confession correctly states: "the one holy church is the *congregation of saints*; nevertheless, in this life, many hypocrites and wicked men are mingled with them."² That the different local assemblies of these professed believers, are all integral parts of the church universal, each having, by divine appointment, all the powers necessary to self-government, independently of all others, is proclaimed alike by the word of God

¹ 1 Cor. 1: 2. See also Heb. 12: 23; Col. 1: 18, 24; and for the invisible church general, Rom. 16: 23; 1 Cor. 12: 18; 1 Cor. 12: 12, 13; Eph. 2: 20.

² Una, sancta ecclesia est congregatio sanctorum; tamen, in hac vita, multi hypocritæ et mali admixti sint. Art. VII: VIII.

and the testimony of early history. The testimony of scripture on this subject, is negative. It consists in the entire absence of any traces either of stated connexion or subordination between the different churches or congregations. Nor can it be said there was no time for the apostles to organize the churches into one body, or that the number of churches was so small as to furnish no occasion or material for such organization. Some of the apostles labored about half a century after the church was founded, and the number of churches organized before the death of John, near the close of the century, must have been larger than that embraced in any denomination in our country. Luke does indeed describe *one advisory council* held at Jerusalem, and this example sanctions such synodical meetings, as often as found useful, which, in our church, is once a year. Yet, it should ever be remembered, that the stated and fixed combination of any number of churches into such a body, is of human origin, and can never confer on such bodies or denominations, any powers not inherently possessed by each local church; unless we adopt the absurdity that the church as organized by fallible men, is more perfect than the inspired apostolic model!

The testimony of early history, as to the primitive independence of each local church, is very decided. "Although, says Dr. Mosheim, all the churches were in the first age of Christianity united together in one common bond of faith and love, and were in every respect ready to promote the interest and welfare of each other, by a reciprocal interchange of good offices, yet with regard to government and internal economy, every individual church considered itself, as an independent community, none of them ever looking beyond the circle of its own members for assistance, or recognizing any sort of external influence or authority."¹ That respectable Episcopal historian, *Waddington*, expressly testifies that, "every church (in the first century) was essentially independent of every other.

¹ Mosheim de Rebus Christianorum, Sæc. I. § 48. Coleman's primitive church, p. 49. See also Mosheim's Eccles. History, Murdock edit. vol. I. p. 86, 142.

The churches, thus constituted and regulated, formed a sort of federative body of independent religious communities, dispersed through the greater part of the Roman empire, in continual communication, and in constant harmony with each other."¹ In short, each church was a little republic,² governed on republican principles, a system well calculated to foster civil as well as religious liberty. We might add the testimony of the greatest modern ecclesiastical historian of our age, Neander; but it is superfluous, as the fact is generally conceded, even by the most respectable Episcopal authorities. Of these, we select as representative of that entire class of writers, the distinguished Archbishop of Dublin, *Dr. Whately*, who in his *Essays on the Kingdom of Christ*, employs this explicit language:³ "It seems plainly to have been at least the general, if not the universal practice of the apostles, to appoint over each separate church, a single individual as the chief Governor under the title of "Angel," (i. e. Messenger, or Legate from the Apostles) or "bishop," i. e. Superintendent or Overseer. A church and a diocese seem to have been for a considerable time co-extensive and *identical*. And each church or diocese (and consequently each superintendent) though connected with the rest by ties of faith, and hope, and charity, seems to have

¹ Eccles. History, p. 43.

² "Several years before the American Revolution, there was near the house of Mr. Jefferson, in Virginia, a church which was governed on congregational principles, and whose monthly meetings he often attended. Being asked how he was pleased with the church government, he replied, that it had struck him with great force, and interested him very much; that he considered it the only pure form of democracy that then existed in the world, and had concluded that it would be the best plan of government for the American colonies." See Encyclopedia of Relig. Knowledge, art. Congregationalists.

The same republican tendencies of ministerial parity and congregational elections, is acknowledged by Blackwood's Magazine, a decided advocate of Toryism in church and state. "The anomaly of a popularly elected church, and a hereditary monarchy, cannot co-exist in the same country." Again, "If the cause of universal suffrage is triumphant in the church, how is it to be resisted in the State?" Vol. XI. No. 6. Art. Non-intrusion Question. If such then be the influence of Episcopacy, how much more prejudicial must the influence of Romanism be to our civil liberties.

³ p. 136-137.

been (as has already been observed) perfectly independent as far as regards any power of control. The plan of the apostles seems to have been, to establish a great number of small (in comparison with most modern churches) distinct and independent communities, each governed by its own single bishop; consulting, no doubt, with his own Presbyters, and accustomed to act in concurrence with them, and occasionally conferring with the brethren in other churches, but owing no submission to the rulers of any other church, or to any central common authority, except the apostles themselves." This testimony is valid for the original independence of each congregation; but it cannot be proved from scripture, that of the several ministers (all sometimes called *elders*, and sometimes *bishops*) whom the apostles appointed in every city or place where they organized a church, one was appointed as chief or overseer over the others. It was not until after the apostolic age, that we find evidence of this fact, and then this overseeing minister was at first simply a chairman, or moderator, being merely *primus inter pares*. Episcopacy in its diocesan acceptation, was the gradual growth of later years. There is no trace of stated synods or councils until the middle of the second century, and the council of Nice itself, in the fourth century, rests the dignity and authority even of the metropolitan bishops of Rome, Antioch and Alexandria, *not on any scripture authority*, or divine right, but on ancient *usage*.¹ How unscriptural, superficial and unprotestant is therefore the supposition occasionally advanced, that the organization of local churches into synods or councils, and still more into different separate *denominations*, on the ground of doctrinal diversity, confers on any one of them more rights in the sight of God, than belong to every local church, organized like those of the apostles, or can make any one of them in any higher sense a church of Christ! Equally arrogant also, is the pretence, that larger denominations are, in this respect, necessarily more truly *the*

¹ Τα ἀρχαία ἐκκλησιαστικά, &c., Canon 6. See Dupin, Antiq. Eccles. Discip. Dissert. I, § 7. Mosheim, de Rebus Christianorum. Sæc. II, § 23. Note, and Coleman's Prim. Church, p. 52.

church than smaller ones. If then, as is evident, all primitive churches were equal in authority, and independent of each other, it follows that the church of Christ is not one compactly organized body, much less one organic whole, in the sense of some modern Puseyites, like a huge tree, or animal, or even crystallization, in which the individual parts are lost sight of in the contemplation of the developed whole; and it is equally evident that the organization of the Romish church differs entirely from that of the apostolic example and injunction.

2) Again, contrary to the doctrine of Rome, the church of Christ *must* be distinguished as *visible* and *invisible*; and many members of the former, *do not belong to the latter*. Among the Romanizing tendencies of the present day is, the disposition of Puseyites to return to the old Papal view of the church, as a merely *visible* body, securing salvation to all its members, who receive the sacraments and submit to the church.

The origin of the controversy concerning the *invisibility* of the true church of Christ, may be traced to the disputes between Luther and the Papists on indulgences, justification, human satisfaction, &c. As the parties could not agree, the papists appealed to the church; by which they understood, the pope, bishops and priesthood. But Luther denied that these were the true church; and maintained that the true church could be known, not by a mere outward profession, or subjection to the pontiff, but merely by faith and piety of heart, which is not cognizable by the senses. This is evident from the concession of Bellarmine (Lib. 3, de Eccles. milit. c. 2.) "Luther, says he, in his fourth book on the Bondage of the Will, when Erasmus objected, that it is not possible that God would desert his church for so long a time, replied that God had never deserted his church; but that that is not the church of Christ, which is commonly called so, namely the pope and bishops, but that the church consisted of those few pious persons whom God preserves as a remnant." Dr. Hase has justly remarked, "Protestants could not justify their secession from Rome, without recurrence to the original difference between the internal communion and the external society (the invisible

and visible church) and making the distinction between the kingdom of God as ideal (as it ought to be, the invisible church) and the imperfect realization of it in any actually existing (visible) church." Says the distinguished doctrinal historian, *Baumgarten Crusius*, "The division of the church into visible and invisible, grew up naturally in the Reformation from the duplicate antithesis of the same to the Romish church, in which the idea of the visible church preponderated, and to the Separatists, who held only to an internal (invisible) church." "By this (division) the essence of Protestantism was expressed, namely, that the church real (visible) does not correspond to the church ideal, (invisible) but only aims at it. From this position all the Protestant inferences could be justly deduced, namely, that no actual church is holy, or infallible, or alone able to confer salvation."¹ Amongst the earliest and best definitions of this division, is that of the distinguished theologian, L. Hutter, in the beginning of the seventeenth century. "Viewed in regard to its external signs and rites, the church militant is said to be *visible*, and embraces all those who frequent the assembly of the called (*vocatorum*), whether they are pious or impious, whether they belong to the elect or reprobate. But viewed as a society of believers, having faith and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, the church is termed *invisible*, and is confined to the elect."² Nor is there any want

¹ *Christliche Dogmengeschichte*, vol. II, p. 359.

² *Hutterus*, *Compendium Theologiæ*, 1610. Schmidt's *Dog. der Luth. Kirche*, p. 482. *Reinhard* defines the invisible church: *Cætus eorum, qui per doctrinam Christianam vere emendantur*. And *Quenstedt* Pt. IV, p. 493. "Respectu vocatorum dicitur ecclesia visibilis, respectu *electorum* invisibilis, quæ vero non extra visibilem quærenda, sed illi inclusa est." *Luther* himself thus discriminates between the *visible* and *invisible* church: "Darum um mehreres Verstandes und der Kürze willen, wollen wir die zwei Kirchen nennen mit unterschiedlichen Namen. Die erste, die natürlich, gründlich, wesentlich und wahrhaftig ist, wollen wir heissen eine *geistliche*, innerliche Christenheit. Die andere, die gemacht und *äusserlich* ist, wollen wir nennen eine *leibliche* äusserliche Christenheit; nicht dasz wir sie von einander scheiden wollen, sondern zugleich, als wenn ich von einem Menschen rede, und ihn nach der Seele einen geistlichen, nach dem Leibe einen leiblichen Menschen nenne, oder wie der Apostel pfeget, innerlichen und äusserlichen Menschen zu nennen." *Luther's Werke*, (Walch's ed.) Th. 18., S. 1214.

of scriptural evidence for this division. Indeed it runs through the entire teachings of both Testaments, and is necessary to its spirituality of interpretation. When the Savior denounces the Scribes and Pharisees, who made loud professions of religion, as hypocrites, as blind guides, as fools, because they were guilty of gross hypocrisy, because "*outwardly they appeared righteous to men, but within were full of hypocrisy and iniquity*;"¹ how can we properly interpret the language of our Lord, unless we admit that there was a spiritual kingdom of heaven, to which they did not belong, although they were prominent members of the outward church of the Jews. Again, what can be more distinct than the declaration of the same divine instructor, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, (that is, professes my name, belongs to my church on earth) shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, (shall be saved); but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven!" Hence some members of the visible church will be excluded from heaven, which cannot be the case with any member of his mystical body; "the church,"² who are all united to him by a living faith. Was not Simon the sorcerer, admitted to the church visible by baptism, and yet an inspired apostle declared to him: "thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right with God."³ To the Romans⁴ Paul declared that outward circumcision did not constitute the genuine Jew, but that "circumcision which is of the heart, in the spirit." The true worshippers, whom the Father seeketh, are those who worship in spirit and in truth,"⁵ and all the distinguishing qualifications of a true member of the church are spiritual, such as repentance, faith, union with Christ, and sanctification. Hence it must follow that the true church of the Redeemer, to which alone the promises of eternal life are given, must be distinguished from that outward church, within which the true church is indeed ordinarily found; but which also embraces many who merely cry Lord, Lord, and shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. On

¹ Matt. 23 : 24, 25, 28.

² Col. 1 : 18. Ephes. 4 : 16. ³ Acts 8 : 13, 21. ⁴ 2 : 8. ⁵ John 4 : 23.

the other hand, those who possess these moral characteristics of the children of God, and have not had an opportunity to be baptized, are doubtless to be regarded as true members of the spiritual or invisible church of the Redeemer, and will certainly be saved.¹

From these considerations we think it must be evident, not only that the Romish doctrine of the church, as a merely visible body, is contrary to scripture, but also that it is an error naturally leading to most pernicious consequences, unfavorable to true spirituality in the church visible, and closely allied to that soul-destroying system of lifeless formalism and corruption which characterizes Rome as the great Apostacy. The revival of the erroneous view of the church among the Puseyites of Europe and America, cannot be regarded in any other light than as one of those Romanizing tendencies, which are alike the grief and the reproach of the Protestant church.

3) Again, the Romish idea of the *infallibility of the church*, is alike destitute of foundation in reason and scripture, and is a vain attempt of sinful worms of the dust to arrogate to themselves an attribute of Jehovah. Romanists do not generally contend that the body of believers, the mass of the church, possesses this attribute; they more commonly ascribe it to the

¹ This position is fully sustained by the distinguished Hollazius, from whose excellent system of Theology, first published in the year 1708, and now rarely accessible, the student will be pleased to see the following interesting extract:

Pars IV. De Ecclesia Synthetica, Cap. I., p. 813.

Quest. XV.—*Sunt catechumeni ante susceptum baptismum, vera ecclesiae membra?*

Catechumeni notitia Christianæ religionis imbuti, etiam ante perceptum baptismum sunt vera et viva membra ecclesiae.

Prob. 1) Quia catechumeni doctrina Christiana informati, ex prædicatione evangelii fidem acceperunt. Rom. x, 17. Per fidem autem sunt filii Dei atque adeo etiam filii ecclesiae. Nam qui spiritualiter regenerantur, eorum Pater est Deus, ecclesia mater. Gal. iv, 26.

2) Item participes sunt bonorum ecclesiae, scil. remissionis peccatorum et renovationis Spiritus sancti.

3) Latro in cruce, Valentinianus Imperator, et martyres ante susceptum baptismum ad tormenta rapti, facti sunt cives ecclesiae triumphantis. Ergo etiam fuerunt cives ecclesiae militantis.

hierarchy of popes, bishops and cardinals.¹ But the very conflicts which have raged amongst them, in regard to the location of this infallibility, proves the fallacy of the claim. The Transalpines contend that it is vested in the popes; the Cisalpines denying this, find it in the bishops in general council assembled; and others, proving both these opinions erroneous, profess to find it in the body of the church; but independently of all other argument, the glaring contradictions, the gross immoralities and grievous doctrinal errors, recorded of them all on the pages of history, demonstrate that it belongs to neither. How can a body that is made up of fallible parts be itself infallible? A clean thing cannot come out of an unclean one, nor can an infallible whole be made up of fallible parts. We know that the church never has been infallible in fact, either under the Old or New Testament dispensation. Did not the Israelites err when Aaron, the head of the church, made the golden calf? Or when, after the death of Joshua, they forsook the Lord, and served Baalam? Did not the Scribes and Pharisees, the heads of the Jewish church, err when they transgressed the commandment of God by their traditions? As to the church of the New Testament, the apostle Paul expressly predicted her "falling away," as the man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple (or church) of God, showing himself

¹ Their opinion on this subject is thus described by the distinguished Romish champion, Bellarmine: "*Nostra sententia est, Ecclesiam absolute errare non posse, nec in rebus absolute necessariis, nec in aliis quæ credenda vel facienda nobis proponit. Et cum dicimus ecclesiam errare non posse, id intelligimus tam de universitate fidelium, quam de universitate episcoporum, ita ut sensus istius propositionis, "Ecclesia non potest errare," sit, id quod omnes fideles tenentur credere, est verum et de fide, et similiter id quod omnes episcopi docent tanquam ad fidem pertinens, est verum et de fide.*" "*Tota auctoritas ecclesiæ formaliter non est nisi in prælatis, sicut visus totius corporis formaliter est tantum in capite; ergo idem est ecclesiam non posse errare in definiendis rebus fidei, et episcopus non posse errare.* Nor does he affirm this infallibility of the bishops individually. "*Sed hoc de illis congregatis in Concilio tantum intelligi, quia singuli seorsum errare possunt.*" *Lib. de Ecclesia, cap. 14.*

(pretending) that he is God."¹ and the testimony of history, in unmistakable accents, proclaims the church of Rome as the original of the apostle's picture! Nor did our Savior ever pronounce his church infallible, or promise to make her so. He did indeed promise to be with his disciples always, "even until the end of the world," namely to bless them and prosper their labors for his cause; but not to confer infallibility upon them. His promise to send the Holy Spirit to his disciples "to lead them into all necessary truth," was primarily addressed to his inspired apostles, who doubtless were infallible guides of the church; but it involves no promise of infallibility to the church at large, or in after ages. And although he admonished the Jews to hear the Scribes and Pharisees when sitting in Moses' seat, it is only when they teach the doctrines of Moses, for he himself denounces in the strongest terms, their corruptions of that law. Since the word of God says not a word about any supposed infallibility of the church, since the Savior and his apostles denounced the Old Testament church as having grievously erred; since they predict the apostacy of the New, and urge to give heed to the sure word of prophecy or inspiration, saying, "If we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be anathema;" with what shadow of propriety can we concede to the church of Rome, or to any other church, a claim to infallibility, either in matters of doctrine or practice? No, the "Holy Scriptures" were intelligible to Timothy even as "a child," and "able to make him wise unto salvation;"² the things recorded in the New Testament also were "written that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we might have life through his name;"³ and every man in every age, is bound indeed to hear the instructions of the ministers of the church; but then also to search the scriptures daily, like the faithful and noble Bereans, to see whether these instructions accord with the only infallible rule of faith and practice, which God has given to man, regardless of any interpretations of any pretended infallible church on earth.

¹ 2 Thess. 2 : 34. ² 2 Tim. 3 : 15. ³ John 20 : 31.

4) The Romish doctrine of the *legislative power of the church*, especially in establishing *new doctrines and creeds as binding on the conscience*, is proof of her antisciptural character; whilst the principles of Protestantism concede to every man the right to *derive his doctrines from the word of God*, and to profess such creed as he believes accordant with it.

This pretended power, sometimes designated the *potestas* νομοθετικῇ, or διατακτικῇ, has been usurped by the Romish church in its most presumptuous forms, as binding the conscience *per se*, and as involving mortal sin in its transgression. But neither our time nor space will allow us to enter into specifications from history, or to present details from her voluminous Canon Law. The recent enactment of the old unscriptural, Franciscan notion of the immaculate conception of the virgin Mary, into a doctrine of the Romish church, amid the light of this nineteenth century, renders all argument superfluous to intelligent minds. We shall simply state the scriptural principles on this subject, which were avowed by Luther himself till his death, and, except in the matter of Zwingli, consistently adhered to in practice.

Even in the Old Testament, God explicitly commanded through Moses, "Ye shall not add to the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it."¹ And in regard to one book of the New Testament, and by inference to all, he denounces a fearful judgment on "any man, who shall add unto these things, or take away from them."² Our blessed Savior himself denounces that "worship as vain, which teaches the commandments of men for doctrines of God."³ The ministers of Christ are commanded in his final commission, to teach only "whatsoever he had commanded them," and should ministers attempt to impose unauthorized requisitions, the apostle Paul exhorts the christians in general not "to be the servants of men," but "to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free."⁴ In view of these precepts, and the general principles of the New Testament, every minister desiring to keep a clear conscience before God,

¹ Deut. 4: 2. ² Rev. 22: 18. ³ Matt. 15: 9. ⁴ 1 Cor. 7: 23. Gal. 5: 1.

should approach the subject of church organizations and creeds with the utmost objectivity of mind. We should transfer ourselves in thought to the apostolic age, and inquire what are the principles on which the Savior and his apostles founded his church and desired it to be administered. What principles did they directly announce, and what did they inculcate by their example. Having thus acquired a distinct conception of the primitive, the *inspired ideal of a church*, we should examine every postapostolic practice and principle found in the church in which Providence has cast our lot. All that we find accordant with the primitive model, as delineated in our inspired directory, the New Testament, we should advocate and promote; but every rite, doctrine or principle, which, after deliberate examination, we judge contrary to the revealed will of God, or prejudicial to the interests of his kingdom, we are ~~sa-~~ credly bound, regardless of human authority, to oppose by argument, to abstain from in practice, and to labor to reform. Thus shall we carry out the Protestant principle that the Bible is our only infallible rule of faith and practice; and on this recuperative principle alone, can the purity of the church be preserved in all ages, and her primitive lustre be restored when it has become obscured in the progress of her extension.¹

¹ Applying these principles to human creeds as tests of ecclesiastical communion, we must inquire, what inspired authority have we for them. And finding none at all, unless it be as an inference from the duty to exclude heretics, and to demand for admission a profession of the belief that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;" we should require only the fundamental doctrines, those without which no man can be regarded as a christian, and so many points of government and discipline, as are essential to harmonious coöperation. More doctrines than these we are forbidden to admit into our confession of faith as a test, by the command of Paul to "receive a brother that is weak in the faith, but not for doubtful disputation,"—less than this will not enable us to exclude fundamental errorists, nor to strive together harmoniously for the furtherance of the gospel. This sentiment pervaded the Christian church during the first five centuries of her history, during which no creeds were used as tests, other than the so called Apostle's creed, of about one page during three hundred years, the Nicene and Constantinopolitan, which contained only a few additional sentences, and the Athanasian creed, amounting to two or three pages. This amount of doctrinal requisition, with a few additions by subsequent councils, remained till the sixteenth century. But about a quarter of a century after Luther and Melancthon had been

3. That the Romish and Puseyite systems are not the system of the bible, and the Protestant is, appears further from their respective *views of the gospel ministry*.

1) The vaunted *apostolic succession*, as the channel of all ministerial authority and blessing, is a mere figment of the imagination. The idea contended for by Papists is, that there has been a regular uninterrupted succession of diocesan bishops and popes from the days of the apostles to the present time; that only in the line of this succession can there be any valid ministry and sacraments, and that all not receiving the ordinances from these hands, are without the pales of salvation. But is it not remarkable, if such succession be so important, that the scriptures are silent on the subject? The apostle Peter represents the whole body of believers as "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," that they "should show forth (*ἐξαγγείλητε*, announce, proclaim) the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous

translated to a better world, a new era and an entire change in the length of prescribed symbols was introduced, unheard of in the history of the church and alien to the spirit of these great Reformers. About this time some of the Protestant princes of Germany, instead of requiring assent to the above named brief creeds of the earlier centuries, which contained not one of the errors of Popery, and to the requisition of which no one would have objected, demanded the assent of pastors to half a dozen additional doctrinal publications, all except one emanating indeed from Luther and Melancthon, but never designed by them to be binding on the church. Thus instead of a few pages of ancient creeds of fundamentals, with as many pages more of modern additions which might have been needed, rejecting the later errors, especially of Rome; these princes, with the connivance of many theologians, forced upon a large part of the church, a volume of uninspired faith, nearly as large as the bible itself. But the experience of more than two and a half centuries has, in the judgment of the great majority of the church, proved the operation of this system of colossal symbols to be unfavorable. In no kingdom of Europe are these symbols now required, and a very small portion of our church in Europe or America exacts more than the bible and the substance of the Augsburg Confession, as is done by our General Synod in this country. And why should Lutheran ministers rob themselves of the liberty wherewith Christ and Luther, and their American fathers made them free? Why should they not trust themselves with that amount of doctrinal liberty, which the entire church of Christ enjoyed for five hundred years? But we have no fears that they will prove recreant to themselves, and to the primitive church of the Redeemer.

light."¹ In accordance with the spirit of this declaration, the Reformers regarded the gospel ministry, not as a separate order, but an office in the church. In the language of the appendix to the Smalcald Articles, "the office of the ministry is not restricted to any particular place or persons, as the Levitical office was restricted by the law; but it is scattered over the whole world, and is found in any place where God bestows his gifts, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, &c. Nor does the office or word, enjoined by Christ, at all depend on the person. Let preach and teach whoever will, wherever there are hearts that believe and adhere to the truth, they will receive what they hear and believe."² Yet, as there is a "diversity of gifts, and a diversity of operations"³ among the members of the church, each duty is not obligatory on every individual; but the church selects officers to preach, and others to attend to the distribution of alms, &c. Ministerial authority is therefore derived not by transmission from the apostles in lineal succession, but in every case from the church, although she may employ existing ministers as her agents in performing the ceremony.

Again, if such apostolic succession were of any value, its reality could not be proved in regard to any church on earth. The records of antiquity afford us no reliable information at all in regard to hundreds of bishops; and within the sphere of history definitely known to us, the chain of succession has been repeatedly broken. On the Papal succession let it suffice to hear the testimony of the Romish historian, Baronius. Speaking of the tenth century, he says: "How exceedingly foul was then the (Romish) church, when most powerful and

¹ 1 Peter 2: 9.

² Nu ist je das Predigamt an kein gewis Ort noch Person gebunden, wie der Leviten Amt im Gesetz gebunden war, sondern es ist durch die ganze Welt ausgestreuet, und ist an dem Ort da Gott seine Gaben gibt, Aposteln, Propheten, Hirten, Lehrer, &c. Und thut die Person gar nichts zu solchem Wort und Amt, von Christo befohlen; es predige und lehre es wer da wölle, wo Herzen sind die es gläuben und sich daran halten, den widerfähret wie sie es hören und gläuben." Müller's Sym. Bücher p. 333, t. 26. See also t. 24.

³ 1 Cor. 12: 4, 6.

sordid harlots ruled at Rome, at whose will the sees were changed, bishops were presented, and what is horrid to hear, and indescribable, false pontiffs (pseudo-pontifices) their lovers, were introduced into the chair of Peter! For who can affirm that *men illegally introduced by wicked women of this sort, were Roman pontiffs?*" There never was any mention of the clergy electing or afterward approving. All the canons were closed in silence, the decrees of the pontiffs were suppressed, the ancient traditions were proscribed, and the ancient customs in electing the popes, and the sacred ceremonies and usages of former days *were wholly extinct.*"¹ When one of the very ablest of Romish historians so completely disproves the papal succession, it may be regarded as superfluous to subjoin much additional argument. Of course, if apostolic succession were essential, then, as sundry links in the chain are confessedly broken, the entire series of episcopal and ministerial links suspended on it, must fall to the ground, and there is verily no continuous apostolic succession either in the papal, episcopal, or any other church at the present day, and of consequence, not a valid minister to be found on earth!²

¹ Baronius' Eccles. Annal. A. D. 912.

² Touching the subject of apostolic succession in the Episcopal church of England and our own country, whose line of succession is traced through England, Dr. Pond, a highly respectable divine of New England, makes this remark: "Allowing that the church of Rome is capable of transmitting the succession, with all the mystical virtues supposed to be attached to it, can the English bishops prove incontestably that they are in the succession of the Romish church? It has been strenuously insisted that this cannot be proved. It has been said that in the year 668, the successors of Austin, the monk, being almost entirely extinct, by far the greatest part of the bishops were of Scottish ordination by Aidan and Finnan, who came out of the Culdee monastery of Columbanus, and were no more than presbyters."

The real merits of this apostolic succession are justly estimated by bishop Hoadley, of the Episcopal church of England: "I am fully satisfied," says he, "that until a consummate stupidity can be happily established, and universally spread over the land, there is nothing that tends so much to destroy all due respect to the clergy, as the demand of more than can be due to them; and nothing has so effectually thrown contempt upon a regular succession of the ministry, as the calling no succession regular but what is uninterrupted; and the making the eternal salvation of Christians to depend upon that uninterrupted succession, of which the most learned have the least assurance, and the unlearned can have no notion, but through ignorance and credulity."

But the absurdity of these consequences shows the fallacy of the position whence they flow. Apart from all this, the impossibility of either papal or episcopal succession, is demonstrated by the fact, proved in a former part of this discourse, that for the first century after the foundation of the Christian church, there was no such officer in existence as a diocesan bishop, and for several centuries more no pope! How could there be a succession of that which did not even exist. Finally, if such succession had really existed, and were fully ascertained, it would prove nothing as to the validity of any ministry. Were not Annas and Caiphas *successors* of Aaron, and yet, did they not aid in crucifying the Savior? No, the only succession of any value, is doctrinal and practical, is conformity to the Savior and his apostles in adoption of the glorious truths they taught, and in observance of the rules laid down by them for the government of the church. These regulations require, that ministers should be called and appointed, that is, ordained by the church of every age and period. The existing ministry, as divinely appointed agents of the church, should always perform the ceremonies of the occasion, as seen in the apostolic example, and that of the primitive eldership, or presbytery, or ministerium; but the immediate fountain of their authority is the church itself. "Thus, (say the Smalcald Articles) the council of Nice (in the fourth century) decreed that each church should elect a bishop for itself, in the presence of one or more neighboring bishops."¹ Again, "This is proved by the common practice of the churches. For formerly the people elected the ministers and bishops. Then came the bishop of the same place or the vicinity, and confirmed the bishop elect by the imposition of hands, and *at that time ordination was nothing else than such a confirmation*,"² (Latin copy *comprobatio*, approbation). "Hence we perceive, that *the church has the power to choose and ordain* her officers (Latin copy, *ministros*, her ministers). Therefore, if the bishops are either heretics, or will not ordain qualified persons,

¹ Müller's Symb. Bücher, p. 331. Appendix to Smalc. Art.

² Idem. p. 342.

it is the sacred duty of the churches, by divine right, *to ordain ministers and church officers for themselves.*"¹ And what idea Luther attached to the term church, he clearly informs us. "*Wherever the preaching of the gospel is sustained, there is certainly the christian church and the kingdom of Christ, no matter how small be the cluster of its professors.*"² That is, the reformers regarded any individual, local society of professed believers, who statedly worshipped together, as a valid church of Christ, possessing the inherent power of electing and ordaining ministers of the gospel.

Nor does the opinion of these distinguished men of God seem to be adverse to the word of inspiration. If it was the business of the entire church at Jerusalem to elect a minister of the highest order, even an apostle, in place of the fallen Iscariot,³ if it was their province to elect the deacons,⁴ if the apostles appointed, by *the lifting up of the hands of the people*, elders or ministers in every city (*χειροτονήσαντες*);⁵ then there can be no doubt, that though ordained or acknowledged by the existing ministry as agents of the church, the authority and validity of ministers in every age, are derived from the church, by whose agents they are thus appointed, and not by any fabled succession from the apostles.

2) Again, the Romish and Puseyite idea, that ministers are channels of some indefinable, mystic influence, handed down from the apostles, and *possess power to forgive sins*, are evidently unscriptural. The former must necessarily fall to the ground with the figment of apostolic succession on which it is

¹ Idem. p. 342.

² Luther's works, Walch's ed., vol. 5, p. 1413.

³ Acts 1: 23.

⁴ Acts 6: 3, 5, 6.

⁵ The term here rendered "ordained" is *χειροτονήσαντες*, which is compounded of the words *χειρ* hand, and *τείνω* to stretch forth or extend, and signifies to stretch forth the hand; and also to vote in an assembly by raising the hand, which was the usual mode of voting in Greece. The word also sometimes signifies simply to elect, but in classic Greek rarely to appoint without an election. On the contrary, *χειροτονεῖν* was contrasted to *λαγχάνειν* as election is to appointment by lot, as in *χειροτονηθεὶς ἢ λαχών*.

suspended. Faithful ministers are indeed an incalculable blessing to the church and the world. Their ministrations are doubtless a savour of life unto life, to all who yield them an attentive ear and an obedient heart; but there is nothing mysterious or mystic about it, nor anything hereditary or traditive, but it is the direct and immediate blessing of the Holy Spirit on the truth dispensed by him, which is able to make them wise unto salvation. As to the *power to forgive sin*, and *private confession* as preparatory to it, they are alike contrary to scripture¹ and reason. There is not a single instance in scripture of private confession to an apostle or minister, or of absolution by either. The cases of confession recorded in the inspired volume, were evidently public and general, and the command, "confess your sins one to another," requires the minister to confess his sins to the laity, as much as the laity to the minister. It is moreover historically certain, that private or auricular confession did not exist, until the fifth century, when it was recommended by Leo, bishop of Rome. And it was not until the thirteenth century after Christ, that it was required as a matter of faith, at least once a year, by the notorious fourth council of the Lateran. The abominations of the confessional, in corrupting the morals of the community, in prying into the most sacred secrets of the domestic fireside, and in exerting an influence on the political destinies of a country, thus placing the whole Romish population at the feet of designing and monarchical priests, is a subject too well known, and too copious to require or admit of adequate elucidation on this occasion. That priestly absolution which is connected with confession, is a gross corruption of Christianity, must be admitted by all, who believe the sentiment which

¹ On this subject we annex the explicit acknowledgment of that distinguished Lutheran divine, Quenstedt, in his *Theologia Didactico Polemica*, published 1585, whilst at the same time he advocates the propriety of retaining the unscriptural, and according to himself, extrascriptural rite of private confession, as modified by the Augsburg Confession; "*Confessio peccatorum privata coram sacerdote ad remissionem peccatorum obtinendam, jure divino non est necessaria.*" And again, "*Nullum habet mandatum, nullam promissionem, nec in Vet. nec in Novo Testamento.*" Vol. III., p. 601, 603.

though uttered by the scribes and Pharisees, was acknowledged by the Savior; "Who can forgive sins but God alone?"¹ and who remember that in still asserting this divine power of forgiving sins, our Lord at once established his claim by a miracle, by demonstrating his control over the powers of nature, saying to the sick of the palsy, "arise, take up thy couch, and go unto thy house." Nay, the Savior himself, in his memorable prayer, teaches us to apply, not unto men, but to our Father in heaven alone for pardon: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." The apostle admonishes his Ephesian brethren at large, "be ye kind one to another, tender hearted and forgiving one another, even as *God*, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you."² But he does not intimate that a single one of them had received forgiveness from any minister. In short, that ministers should possess the power of judicially forgiving sin, is impossible on the principles of God's moral administration. Before sin can consistently be pardoned by God himself, he must know the sincere penitence of the sinner's heart, and what man is there who can search the heart and secret intents of the soul? Even in the Old Testament dispensation, the priesthood did not pretend to forgive sin; and that power was regarded as a prerogative of God alone. "Who, says the prophet Micah, is a God like unto thee, that *pardoneth iniquity*."³ In short, the essence of all sin, consists in its being committed *against God*. It was in reference to sins against his fellow-men, that David exclaims, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." Since then it is God, who is ultimately and chiefly the offended being, from him alone can pardon proceed, and even from him, only in those instances, where his omniscient eye beholds a suitable and penitent recognition of guilt, and purpose of reform. The minister of Christ is indeed authorized and enjoined to proclaim the divine promises of pardon, both publicly and privately, to the truly penitent; but he has no authority to apply these promises to any individual in an unconditional manner, because he cannot certainly know the genuineness of

¹ Luke 5: 21.² Eph. 4: 32.³ Micah 7: 18.

the repentance professed. As to a conditional absolution to an individual, it can be of no more service to him than the general and public proclamation of the promises of pardon, unless he ignorantly considers it unconditional, or regards the willingness of the minister to apply the promises to him as proof of his penitence, and thus he may be led into dangerous and soul-destroying error. From these considerations it would appear, that even the *conditional* and *declarative* form of private absolution, which was long retained by some of the Protestant churches, was well calculated to mislead the sinner, and as to the opportunity for private interview with the individual furnished by the confessional, it can be, and is enjoyed, fully as well without its dangerous concomitant. Moreover, the scriptures teach us, that no unconverted man can be pardoned of God. Further, that when we are converted and exercise faith in Christ, we are justified, that is, are pardoned; and being thus justified by faith, "we have *peace* with God," and *rejoice* in *hope* of the glory of God (Rom. 5: 1, 2), that is *the Holy Spirit produces a conviction of this pardon in our minds*, "the Spirit bearing witness with our spirits, that we are children of God" (Rom. 8: 16). Now when the priest pronounces absolution on one, in whom the Spirit has not yet produced this peace of mind, his testimony is contrary to that of the Holy Spirit, and the sinner either believes the priest or not. If he does, then he believes himself converted and pardoned on the testimony of the priest; when his heart furnishes evidence to the contrary. If he does not believe the priest, his absolution is of course also of no avail.

In short, the fundamental character of the New Testament minister is, that he preaches the truths of the gospel to every creature, and baptises those who believe, teaching them to keep all things that Jesus has commanded. In connexion with these ministrations, the Holy Spirit bestows his influences of every grade and kind, wherever he sees a moral fitness for any of them, and bestows just such blessings as the sinner is prepared to receive.

4. *That the Romish or Puseyite system is not that of the gospel, whilst the Protestant is, appears evident on examina-*

tion of the views of the sacraments in general, advanced by the former.

When we consider the sacraments in general, and not any one of them in particular, the points of divergence between formal and spiritual religionists, between Protestants and Papists, are chiefly two, their number and influence. The former question resolves itself into logomachy. Its decision depends on the definition we adopt of the word sacrament, a word not found in scripture, and, of course, not there applied to any of the rites usually designated by it amongst christians.

Our theme is therefore sustained, when we show that the sacraments do not exert their influence (*ex opere operato*) merely by the intrinsic power of the outward act, regardless of the moral qualifications of the recipient. We say "*merely*," because, of course, these divinely appointed means possess a tendency and adaptation to accomplish the object of their institution. But the question is, were they designed to effect the great moral change, regardless of the blessing of the Holy Spirit and the coöperation of the free agent man; or rather, must not man be "a coworker with God," and even then implore the influence of the Holy Spirit to render effectual his faithful use of the appointed instrumentalities.¹ That the latter is the case appears evident, in the first place,

¹ On the necessity of the work of the Spirit in the heart, in order to give efficacy to baptism, Luther has expressed himself strongly in his very scarce and interesting letter to the Swiss churches, in 1537.

"Desgleichen der Tauf halben, im andern Artikel, spüre ich auch keine Ungleichheit. Denn gleich wie itzt vom mündlichen Wort geredt ist; so halten wir auch dasz Wasser und Wort, (welchs das fürnemst in der Tauf) *ohn den Heiligen Geist inwendig, nichts schaffe äusserlich*; doch solche Tauf Gottes äusserlich Zeichen, ja Gezeug und Werk sey dadurch Gott in uns wirke, &c., damit es nicht ein lauter Menschenzeichen oder Losung sey." De Wettes' "Dr. Martin Luther's Briefe Sendschreiben und Bedenken," &c., vol. V. p. 85. Again, in his Larger Catechism he says:

"The great efficacy and utility of baptism being thus known, let us further see who is the person that receives such things as are offered by baptism. This also is most beautifully and clearly expressed in these words: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." That is, *faith alone makes a person worthy to receive this salutary and divine water with advantage*. "Without faith baptism is of no profit, although it cannot be denied, that it is in

Because a previous moral qualification is distinctly required in scripture, for the reception of the sacraments. In the great commission of our Savior, *faith* is absolutely demanded, "he that *believeth*" and is baptized, &c. Nor did the apostles entertain a different view, or pursue a contrary practice. When at the memorable pentecostal scene,¹ their hearers, amid deep compunctions of heart, inquired, "Men and brethren, what shall we do," did Peter say, as a papist would, become a member of the church by baptism, and then all your sins are forgiven? No, he required a moral preparation, he told them "repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," &c.; and then we are told, not that all were baptized, but that the rite was administered only to those who "gladly" received the word, that is, who received it with approbation, and yielded obedience to it. But let us examine the practice of the apostles still farther. When the Ethiopian eunuch solicited baptism² at the hands of Philip, what was his reply? Did he baptise him regardless of his state of moral preparation? Certainly not. Although he knew that the eunuch had come to the holy city as a devout "worshipper," and although he had found him "reading the scriptures," this amount of seriousness and external worship was not deemed sufficient, and he distinctly suspended his own willingness to administer the ordinance, on the fact of his *decided and cordial faith* in the Lord Jesus, "*If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest;*" and only after the applicant made the distinct profession, "I do believe," was he baptized by him. So also in the case of Saul of Tarsus,³ before he was baptized, it is recorded that he surrendered his heart to God at the time of the Savior's miraculous appearance, saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do;" and further, the Lord himself bore witness that he was a praying man, "Behold he prayeth," said he to Ananias in a vision. The great apostle to the Gentiles was, therefore, certainly a believer before his baptism.

itself a celestial and inestimable treasure." From the Latin. Müller's Symb. books, p. 490.

¹ Acts 2: 37, 38. ² Acts 8: 37, &c. ³ Acts 9: 11, &c.

The apostle Peter¹ also suspends the blessing of baptism in adults,² not on the outward performance of the rite, or, as he terms it, "the putting away of the filth of the flesh," by the application of water; but on (ἐπερωτημα) "the answer of a good conscience towards God," that is, a conscience that bears "good" testimony, concerning our sincerity in making the external profession in baptism, and concerning the personal dedication of our souls and bodies to God for time and eternity.

Again, in regard to the Lord's Supper, Paul expressly demands previous moral qualification for its reception, when he enjoins self examination, and denounces the judgment of God on all who receive it unworthily; which he could not do, if the external reception of the sacraments of itself secured the intended blessing.

Again, the Scriptures denounce condemnation on all who are destitute of faith, regardless whether they have received the sacraments or not; which could not be done, if these rites effected the pardon of sin by their intrinsic power, independently of the moral character of the recipient. He that *believeth* and is baptized, says our great Redeemer, shall be saved; but he that *believeth not* shall be damned. That is, no matter what other qualifications an individual may possess, if he dies destitute of faith, he is lost for ever. He that *believeth not*, says the same divine personage, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.³ "He that *believeth not* the Son shall not see life; but

¹ 1 Peter 3: 21.

² We remark here, once for all, that as these passages all relate to adults, they are not applicable to infant baptism. Although the New Testament repeatedly speaks of the baptism of entire families, in which infants would naturally be contained, the inspired writers nowhere specify the prerequisites or the consequences of this rite in the case of infants. The inference of the baptists against the propriety of pedobaptism, is, however, utterly illogical, as is seen in the case of circumcision, which though requiring previous faith in adults, was specifically commanded to be applied to infants. Infant subjects of baptism doubtless receive a divine blessing at the time, the nature of which the scriptures do not specify, and they become partakers of the blessings of the believing adult subject, as far and as fast as they are intellectually and morally qualified to receive them.

³ John 3: 18.

the wrath of God abideth on him." Now in these and a multitude of similar passages, faith is represented as the essential condition of salvation, and the want of it the certain cause of condemnation, without any thing being said of baptism; which could not be the case if baptism were in the same sense necessary to salvation, and the want of it always involved the loss of the soul, as Romish and Puseyite authors maintain.

Further, if baptism or the eucharist were always the certain precursor of salvation, and the want of them invariably involved spiritual death, should we not naturally expect, that the Savior and his apostles would have made the administration of these ordinances; instead of preaching, the great business of their public labors through life? Yet we find that "Jesus himself baptized not,"¹ and the illustrious apostle of the Gentiles, though certainly well acquainted with the plan of salvation, and with the relative importance of its different parts, could not have said, "I thank God that I baptized none of you (Corinthians) except Crispus and Gaius," and the household of Stephanas; besides I know not whether I baptized any other; for *Christ sent me, not to baptise, but to preach the gospel.*"²

Nor can the Romish and Puseyite view be correct, when we reflect that the Bible represents conversion as a *spiritual* and *intellectual*, but not a physical change. How can the application of water to the body, purify or convert the mind, unless it be through the mental exercises connected with it, unless it be performed as a prescribed act of obedience to God, with sincere aspirations for his blessing. But who can believe, that the mere outward act, if performed without the proper views and feelings, and if combined with hostility to God, and with the purpose of continuance in sin, could obtain the divine blessing, or exert a purifying, renovating influence on the soul, much less could secure the favor of that God, who denounces as hypocrites and vain worshippers, those that "draw nigh unto him with their mouth, and honor him with their lips, whilst their heart is far from him?"³ Finally, this doctrine cannot

¹ John 4: 2.

² 1 Cor. 1: 15, 16.

³ Matt. 15: 7, 8.

be of God, because of its perceptible tendency to promote a frigid formalism, and a rank hypocrisy. When the benefits of an ordinance are supposed to depend on the frame of mind attending its performance, there is an obvious and powerful motive for due attention to these requisites, and for effort to perform these rites with suitable frame of mind, in order to secure the desired blessing. But when the state of mind is regarded as unimportant, or, at least, as not essential, the natural tendency of the mind to wander is encouraged, and the rite degenerates into mere lip service, and often a mockery of God. If then this Romish view were correct, if the sacraments conferred pardon and salvation on men, regardless of their moral characters, they would unavoidably fill heaven with impenitent sinners, with hypocrites, with sabbath breakers, with profane swearers, with drunkards, and almost every other species of criminals; for it cannot be denied, that many of all these classes have, at different times, and in different countries and churches, been admitted to these holy sacraments. And, need we add, that such a rite cannot possibly belong to the religion of that Savior, who has taught us, that not every one who cries Lord, Lord, that is, professes his name, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but those only, "who also perform the will of his Father in heaven." In short, the idea that pardon of sin is necessarily consequent on the performance of any outward rite, is alike repugnant to reason and scripture, and inconsistent with the principles of God's moral administration, as well as with the philosophy of the gospel plan of salvation. Repentance and faith are the divinely established conditions of pardon, and they include a moral fitness in the subject for the blessing involved. But mere external rites can be performed by the impenitent, the unbelieving, and even the openly vicious, who are destitute of all moral preparedness for pardon, and cannot therefore be the condition of forgiveness in a plan of remedial influences, every part of which possesses a moral congruity and adaptation. In a church conducted on this formal system, the majority of hearers never acquire a clear idea of conversion, or of genuine spiritual reli-

gion. Such a congregation presents the strange spectacle of persons possessing no evidence of christian character, and yet statedly receiving the sacraments of the supper, and, as they suppose, the pardon of their sins, then as statedly returning to the world and crucifying afresh the Lord of Glory with their transgressions. Even the mind of the minister himself becomes confused, and has no distinct perception of the difference between the church and the world; whilst his preaching becomes equally indiscriminate and pointless, and unprofitable to the souls committed to his care.

5. *Finally, That the Romish and Puseyite system is not that of the gospel, whilst the Protestant is, appears manifest from their respective views of justification, and spiritual culture, or the pastoral charge.*

In regard to the justification of the sinner before God, the sacred volume has delineated its entire graciousness in such clear and striking colors, that all the reformers, when their minds became released from the delusion of their Romish education, settled down in its firm persuasion. Nor is it easy to conceive how this doctrine could be presented in clearer terms than those of the illustrious apostle of the Gentiles. "Being justified, says he, freely, or as the Greek (*δωρεάν*) signifies *gratuitously*, by his *grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."¹ Again, "If by *grace*, then it (our salvation) is no more of work; otherwise grace is no more grace."² Once more, "For *by grace* ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: *Not of works* lest any man should boast."³ But it is superfluous to accumulate proofs on this obvious and cardinal doctrine. Next to those truths received by all christians, some of which Luther would have pronounced still more important, such as the existence of God and divinity of Christ, he pronounced this the vital feature, the pillar of the church. It is the fundamental feature of Lutheranism, and far more important than any of the peculiarities in which she differs from her sister denominations, as even Dr. *Guericke*, of Halle, now happily believes, and

¹ Rom. 3: 24.

² Rom. 11: 6.

³ Ephes. 2: 8.

has lately maintained with much propriety. The Romish and Puseyite doctrine of justification by inherent righteousness or works, such as attendance on mass, repetition of a number of prayers, Ave Marias, pecuniary donations to the priests for indulgences or alms, performing works of self-mortification, &c., is subversive of this vital doctrine of the gospel, and tends to cherish a spirit of self-righteousness and self-dependance. It generates spiritual pride and fosters ignorance of the plan of salvation through Christ. Especially does it obscure the glory of the Savior's great work of redemption, and of his mediatorial reign. Hence we do the *Puseyites* no injustice, by classing them in the same category with the *Romanists*, when they style the grand gospel truth of a gracious justification, "the hateful," "fundamental," "unchristian," "subtle" and "extensively poisonous," "Lutheran heresy."

Again, that feature of spiritual culture, which regards and treats as christians all baptized persons who yield a prevailing external obedience to the ordinances of the church, is decidedly antisciptural and injurious to the spirituality of religion. It ignores that division of the church into visible and invisible, established in a former part of this discussion, and conflicts with the rule of our Savior to judge of the tree by its fruits, and not to regard all as entitled to heaven, who merely cry "Lord, Lord," but only those who also "do the will of his heavenly Father."

Again, the indiscriminate or collective mode of admitting the entire rising generation to sacramental communion, at a certain age, practised by the Romish church, and by some Protestant churches of Europe, in obedience to the obtrusive and unauthorized enactments of civil government, is unscriptural, and in violation of the principles of christian discipline. Every man is naturally a sinner individually, he is required to repent individually, to believe individually, and perform all his religious obligations individually. These obligations cannot be performed by proxy, by parents for children, or children for parents; nor aggregately, by the mass of a congregation so as to include some delinquent members of it. Every soul is a unit,

and all its obligations, privileges and destinies belong to it as a unit, though associated with others.

But the fallacy of these practices will further appear whilst we exhibit, in conclusion, the apostolic method of *Christian Evangelization* and *Church culture*, as apprehended by the Protestant churches. Five features particularly arrest our attention on an examination of the inspired narrative. *First*, the apostles "preached the word" in season and out of season, and with a view to present effect. *Secondly*, when they noticed the influence of the truth, or heard the inquiry, "men and brethren, what shall we do," they gave to such awakened souls specific instruction, as their case might require.² This can be done partly in the public discourse, and partly at special meetings for inquiring sinners. *Thirdly*, when they found that these awakened sinners believed in the Lord Jesus Christ with all their hearts,³ they introduced them, "together with their households,"⁴ into the visible church, into the society of believers, by the ordinance of baptism,⁵ thus adding to the church daily⁶ them that were saved," or rescued from the world and from sin, converted, (τὰς σωζόμενους). *Fourthly*, the apostles, together with the brotherhood, continued to watch over, edify and direct their new converts,⁷ "confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith."

¹ Matt. 11: 28. Acts 2: 38. 40: 42. ² Acts 2: 38.

³ Acts 8: 37. If thou believest (in the Lord Jesus Christ) with all thy heart, thou mayest (be baptized).

⁴ Acts 16: 15. "Lydia and her household."—33. "The jailor and all his." 1 Cor. 1: 16. Stephanas and his household.—Mark 10: 14. Children belong to "the kingdom of God."—1 Cor. 7: 14.

⁵ Acts 2: 41.

⁶ Whilst this fact does not militate against the stated admission of the rising generation at one or several fixed times in the year, after a proper course of instruction, and satisfactory examination of each catechumen; it does clearly prove that the admission of adults of suitable qualifications, should not be limited to these intervals, but ought to occur at any time soon after their conversion. This practice doubtless confers special interest on the ordinary exercises of public worship, and tends greatly to keep alive the public interest in the subject of religion.

⁷ Heb. 13: 17. Acts 14: 22. Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith. Acts 20: 31. By the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears.

And *fifthly*, having received the children of professed believers into the church by baptism, they labored faithfully to "train them up in the *nurture and admonition of the Lord*."¹

Thus were the apostles, and thus should ministers now be employed as honored instruments of the Holy Spirit, as co-workers with God, conducting this all important work of *evangelization* and *christian culture*. They are to receive the truth at the mouth of God, and dispense it to dying men. Their's is the high and holy work of searching the scriptures from week to week, of studying the mode of applying its sacred truths to the hearts of sinners, and then actually thus making application of them in the cheering hope of saving immortal souls.

Like a faithful physician, who knows that his entire vicinity

¹ *This Christian Nurture* consists in dedicating the child to God in baptism, and faithfully discharging the obligations towards it, assumed by the parent at the administration of this dedicatory rite. In vindication of this infant dedication, and early christian nurture, we append a few general positions.

There is nothing to prevent children from growing up "*in the Lord*;" grace is as effectual for them as for adults.

As soon as a child is capable of doing wrong, it is also able to do right.

The child is born with a depraved nature; but the curse resting on the depravity, was removed by the death of Christ, and is, therefore, for Christ's sake, not imputed to the child. Rom. 5: 18, 20, 21. John 1: 29. 1 John 2: 2. This blessing is formally sealed to it by baptism, as a baptismal grace.

If the child be not trained from infancy to good, it will naturally grow up a voluntary sinner.

But if it receive proper christian nurture, it may, and probably will strive to resist the solicitations of its depraved nature from early childhood, and by a continuance in this effort of obedience, will, by divine grace, gain a preponderance of holy habits, and be converted. As soon as this preponderance is established, it affords evidence that conversion is effected. The experience of such a converted child will of course be less constant, and more variable than that of most adults; but it is essentially the same.

All christian parents ought to expect, as the result of their parental training, and of the privileges of church instruction, the Sabbath school, ministerial care of the lambs, &c., that all their children will grow up christians. But they ought not to regard any one of them as such, unless it presents the *scriptural evidences*.

Parents should at all ages give their children the instruction suited to their capacity, and at from fourteen to eighteen years of age, send them to the course of instruction for catechumens; but no one ought to be admitted to sacramental communion, unless he or she exhibits evidence of genuine repentance and surrender of the soul to God.

is suffering under a morbid predisposition to epidemic disease, the faithful minister of Christ dispenses the general truths of the gospel, and gives directions for their application to specific cases. But he is not satisfied with this. By pastoral visitation, he learns the peculiar condition of his individual hearers, and personally affords those specific directions suited to the peculiar circumstances of each case.

He draws the line of distinction clearly, in his public and private ministrations, between the church and the world, between the converted and the unconverted; and labors by the blessing of Heaven to add to the church daily such as are saved, as are converted to God, and rescued from the dominion of sin.

He labors in reliance on the blessing of the Spirit, and prays for the special outpouring of the Holy Ghost, that many souls may be born unto God, and be made heirs of eternal life.

Thus does he labor on, striving for the furtherance of the gospel at home and abroad over the world, until he is called by his Master to lay down his armor and enter on his eternal rest, with the pleasing conviction that he has faithfully labored to preach the gospel to every rational creature, and freely offered salvation to all "who believe and are baptized."

By this discussion, we are taught the following important practical positions, of which ministers of the gospel should never lose sight, in their studies and instructions.

We should faithfully guard and adhere to the primitive, apostolical, and inspired model of Christianity, and conscientiously discriminate between it and all uninspired reasonings, teachings and additions. All that we believe contained in scripture we must sacredly retain, and admit nothing from any other source, that is not in entire consistence with it.

We see that there is a strong tendency in the human breast to mere formalism in religious worship, to the neglect of that inward worship in spirit and in truth, which alone can be acceptable to God, who is a spirit. Outward acts and forms are more easily performed by persons of various religious character, than the worship of the heart, and ministers should faith-

fully preach and pray against resting in them alone, as ruinous to the soul.

We learn the incalculable importance of keeping constantly in view the doctrine of individual responsibility in all christians, and urging them to search the scriptures daily, and to think and act for themselves in view of their sacred obligations as detailed in God's word.

The church should guard against the tendency in ministers unduly to exalt their office. The pride of the human heart, from which ministers are also not wholly exempt, delights in pompous forms and robes and ceremonies; and sometimes leads the ministers of the meek and lowly Jesus, to attribute to their office mystic influences and powers alien from the gospel, and prejudicial to the spirituality and individual activity of church members.

We see that the errors of Popery and Puseyism are most grave corruptions of true Christianity, relating not only to matters of collateral nature, but affecting the cardinal doctrines of the gospel; converting the spiritual worship of God into a routine of outward forms and ceremonies, substituting implicit reliance on the priest or minister, in place of direct dependence on the Savior, and teaching for doctrines the traditions and commandments of men.

We learn that genuine Christianity is favorable to popular rights and republican government; whilst Popery and all other minor phases of impurity tend more or less to foster aristocracy, and support the throne.

Finally, we are taught by this discussion, that when the church of the Redeemer is assailed by such formidable foes as Popery and Puseyism, when important inroads are made on her territory in Europe, when her liberty of worship is destroyed, and her members are oppressed and persecuted in countries heretofore tolerant, wisdom dictates that Protestants should cease to contend about their minor differences, and concentrate all their energies against their common foes, striving for the furtherance of the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, until it is preached to every creature, and all nations are made disciples.

14 Mar. 1863.

